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Collected Articles of  
Padmabhushan Prof. J. P. Naik

Dr. Yeshwant R. Waghmare  
Dr. A. Sai Babu



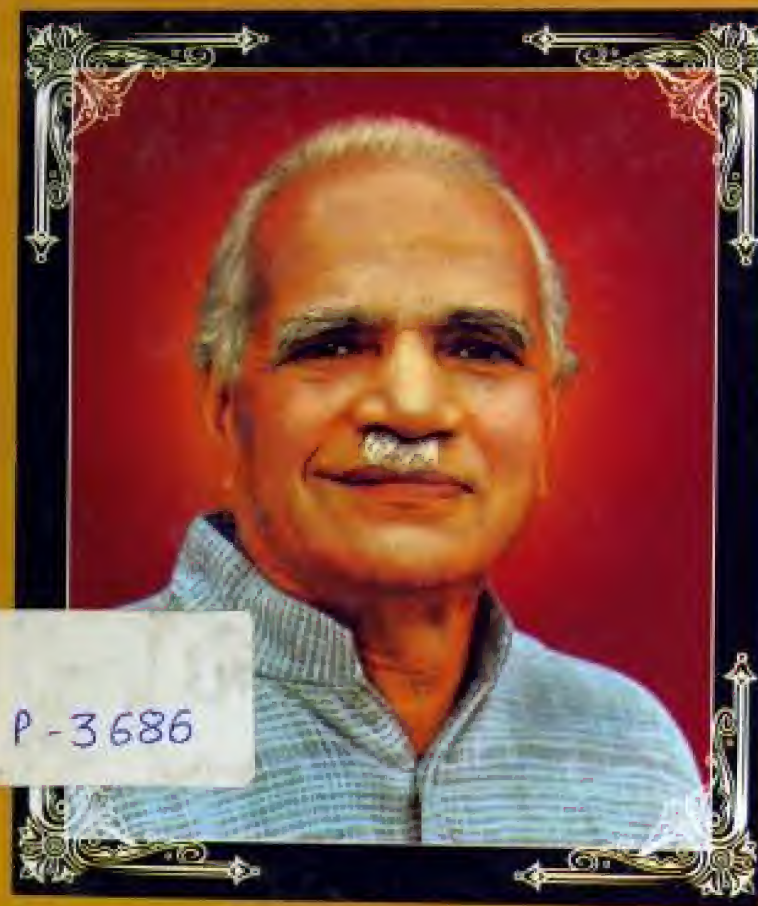
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# Collected Articles of Padmabhushan Prof. J. P. Naik

Volume 2  
Policy Studies



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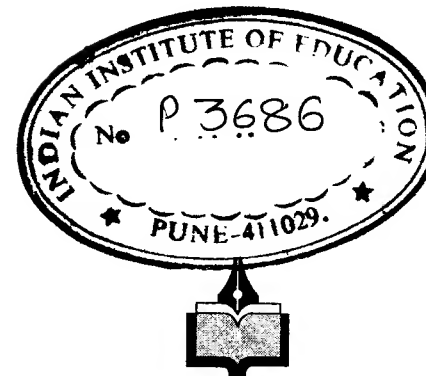
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**Volume II  
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**AUTHORSPRESS**

*in Association with*

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## Foreword

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Prof. J.P.Naik was the most outstanding educator in India's post freedom era. He was born on September 5, 1907. He worked in various capacities at the national level and strived hard to bring about radical change in the Indian educational system. He wanted to transform the educational system to cater to the developmental needs of the newly born nation. The Indian Institute of Education which was set up by Prof. Naik in the year 1948 and shifted to Pune in 1976 decided to observe the period of September 5, 2006-2008 to commemorate his birth centenary. Several programmes were organised during this period, such as the Release of Postage Stamp by Prime Minister in honour and memory of Prof. J.P.Naik, seminars, discussion forums, four issues of a Marathi journal, biographical sketch of Prof. Naik, a documentary, two volumes in Marathi of Prof. Naik's articles on various aspects of education, his biography in Marathi, etc. It was also felt that compilation of the 'Collected Articles of Prof. J.P.Naik' be published as a part of the centenary programme. We are extremely happy and grateful to Prof. Y.R.Waghmare and Dr. A.S.Babu for helping the Institute to bring out three volumes covering writings and speeches delivered by this national and internationally distinguished educator in his life time.

Although nearly twenty seven years have passed since Prof. J.P.Naik's demise and the country has taken many steps forward in the field of education, the thoughts and plans of Prof. Naik still continue to be relevant. Our country and the developing societies worldwide needs visionaries like Prof. Naik particularly when educational systems have to cope with the globalisation of education.



We hope that these volumes will be useful to the education community not only of our country but others also.

***Dr. S.R.Gowarikar***

Chairman, J.P.Naik Birth Centenary Committee

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**Special Pages**

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## **J.P. Naik: Rebel, Scholar and Administrator**

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J. P. Naik, known simply as 'J.P.' to his friends and associates, was born on 5 September 1907 in the small village of Bahirewadi, insignificantly situated in a backward corner of Kolhapur District in Maharashtra. His family was large and poor. His environment was rural, of which poverty and social inequalities were the chief attributes. Its impact on his mind was so deep that it permeated all his basic interests and became the persistent focus of his activities. Whichever field he turned to, his rural bias forcefully rose to the surface.

### **EDUCATION (1912-29)**

Naik began to earn his keep at the age of five by tending cattle and working on farm jobs along with other children of his age. At the rather late age of seven, he entered the village primary school which had classes I-IV and was the only educational institution which served the village. But he learnt in about two years all that the school had to teach and returned to the earlier task of agricultural labour and tending cattle. The happy accident of his sister's marriage into a family in Bail-Hongal, a small town near Belgum, suddenly changed Naik's destiny. His brother in law, an affectionate man, got him to attend the secondary school at Bail-Hongal (which lead classes I -III) and later sent him to Belgum where he could finish middle school education (classes IV -VII).

At Bail-Hongal the medium of instruction was not his mother tongue, Marathi, but Kannada which he mastered quickly and maintained his first position at school. He had an equally good

career in the secondary school in Belgaum, from where he matriculated in 1924. He joined the Karnatak College, Dharwar, where he passed through a socially and economically disastrous period and so transferred himself to Rajaram College, Kolhapur, from where he took his B.A. degree in Mathematics (1929). Throughout his educational career, Naik was known for three things : his voracious reading, not only of books on the subjects in the curriculum but also of those which had little to do with it; helping other students in their studies, occasionally to support himself, but mainly for the fun of teaching and the joy in helping the less advanced students; and his extremely versatile interests which included such diverse fields as Mathematics, History, Sanskrit, English Literature and the social sciences. His college contemporaries often tell juicy little anecdotes about how Naik, professedly a student of mathematics, conducted B.A. classes in English literature while he himself was reading in the Inter Arts, and the attendance far surpassed what the regular professor of the subject ever hoped to attract. Extremely energetic, rebellious, sharp wined, endowed with a keen sense of humour, bubbling with geniality, writing and reciting poetry, he became a great favourite with his classmates and even with some perceptive professors.

#### THE FORMATIVE YEARS (1930-37)

In 1930, the restless young Naik gave up his newly landed job on the staff of Rajaram College in order to join the Civil Disobedience Movement. He was arrested and interned in the Bellary jail for more than a year. For him this was a valuable period of introspection and planning the future. He decided to devote the rest of his life to the education and service of the rural people. He got a chance to work as Chief Orderly in the jail hospital and studied medicine in a very practical way. For Naik, this constituted an additional advantage of his incarceration and along with education, health became his other and equally important interest. Until the end, these twin interests continued to propel his work.\*

It may be mentioned here that his original name was V.H. Ghotge. He adopted the pseudonym, J.P. Naik, while doing underground work in the Civil Disobedience Movement. It stuck to him in jail; and when he came out, he found it more convenient to continue with it, especially as it marked a break with the past and indicated the beginning of a new career. So, he had this change confirmed officially.

On coming out of jail in 1932, he went to the village of Uppin Betigeri in Dharwar district where he engaged himself in teaching in a primary school, conducting a dispensary, and promoting Khadi work. During this period, he started adult education classes and guided the villagers in organising activities for improving their socio-economic conditions. The villagers gladly supported him, each house taking its turn to give him one meal of *jowar bhakri* and a bowl of curds. For his other needs, which were extremely few, they took out a collection of about Rs. 5/- (five) per month. Naik used to describe this as one of the happiest and most formative periods of his life because it was during this period that he acquired a real insight into the Indian society and its problems. The pioneering character of his work and his outstanding achievements won him the Sir Fredrick Sykes Village Improvement Shield for Uppin Betigeri in 1937.

#### NON OFFICIAL WORKER AT THE STATE LEVEL (1937-40)

A new direction to his life opened out when the first Congress Government was formed in the old Bombay State in 1937 with the late Mr. B. G. Kher as Chief Minister and Mr. Morarji Desai as Revenue Minister. He was invited to be a member of the State Boards of Primary and Adult Education and to help the new Government to develop innovative programmes of educational development. Thus began his career as a non-official educationist at the State level. His achievements in the field of primary and adult education between 1937 and 1940 are regarded as outstanding and by themselves form a landmark in the history of education. It was also during this period that he came in contact with and became a friend and a close associate of leading non officials like D. R. Gadgil (and later his two colleagues N. V. Sovani and V. M. Dandekar), R. V. Parulekar, S. R. Bhagwat, M. V. Donde, R. D. Choksi, Godavari Parulekar and M. R. Paranjape. He also developed close working relations with many senior officers of the Bombay Education Department like D. C. Pavate, Syed Nurullah, L. R. Desai, N. R. Trivedi, S. R. Tawde, Sulabha Panandikar, S. S. Bhandarkar and others. Eventually some of these became his lifelong friends and gave him assistance and encouragement to develop his ideas and programmes. During this period, he established the Dharwar Prathamik Shikshana Mandal

which conducted about 30 primary schools in the neglected and backward areas of Dharwar Taluka. In course of time, these schools were handed over to the District School Board for maintenance.

#### THE KOLHAPUR DAYS (1940-47)

Another phase of hectic and extremely significant activity began in Naik's career in 1940. Rao Bahadur P. C. Patil, who was then Education Minister of the princely state of Kolhapur, invited him to assist in the educational reconstruction of the State which had been placed under the administration of a Regency Council after the death of its ruler, Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj. Naik started his work as a part time educational adviser but soon rose to the position of Development Secretary. He became an official and administrator of an unusual type who took no salary but worked for about eighteen hours a day. Taking a comprehensive view of education and development, he reorganised not only educational services but modernised the entire administration of the state and launched several programmes for improving communications, water supply, industry, agriculture, irrigation, power, health, cultural life and practically everything that concerned human welfare within the state, thus more than anticipating the Community Development programmes which were to take shape in the country after Independence. On this vast canvas of activities, what stood out most strikingly, was his extremely imaginative work in the planning and improvement of the city of Kolhapur, the organisation of a novel but simple scheme of village medical aid which anticipates the bare-foot doctor concept, and his formulation of a fifteen-year development plan for the state of Kolhapur which was the first and probably the only attempt of the type in those days. In Kolhapur, Naik acquired another set of devoted friends who worked with him closely and helped him unreservedly. These included Rao Bahadur P. C. Path, E. W. Perry and Sir Thomas Austin who were Prime Ministers of the State, N. V. (Baburao) Joshi, D. S. Mane and above all, Prabhakarpanth Korgaonkar. This very fruitful period, however, ended in 1947 when the Regency administration was dissolved. The new Maharaja who came into power decided to terminate Naik's

services for reasons of his own which ironically enough, he chose to state as 'laziness' and 'dereliction of duty'!

#### INDIAN INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION (1948-59)

Released from administrative burdens, Naik became a life worker of the Korgaonkar Trust in Kolhapur which he continued till the end. In 1948, he shifted to Bombay where, in collaboration with R. V. Parulekar, T. K. N. Menon, V. V. Kamat, A. R. Dawood, N. P. Samant and C. D. Barfivalla, he established the Indian Institute of Education. It was then, and still continues to be, the only institution of its type in the country. It proved extremely useful in stimulating post graduate and research work in education in Bombay State and brought out several valuable publications. Naik, however, was not content with only Bombay based educational activities. The pull of the rural areas led him to establish Shri Mouni Vidyapeeth, a rural institute, at Gargoti in Kolhapur District. Here he had the benefit of working with Acharya S. J. Bhagwat who greatly influenced his ideas not only of educational reconstruction but of social development as well. It was also during this period that he met Dr. Chitra Naik (1948) and later married her (1955). She brought peace, mellowness, and stability in his life, changed it almost totally in all respects and improved both the range and quality of his work beyond recognition.

#### UNION MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (1959-73)

The next phase of his life again made him an official and administrator when, in 1959, the late Dr. K. G. Saiyidain who was then Education Secretary with the Government of India and Dr. K. L. Shrimali, then Union Education Minister, invited him to Delhi. After a good deal of hesitation, he accepted the invitation. He was not sure what he would achieve but he was determined that he would continue his chosen style of life and would not allow himself to be corrupted by the influence of the capital. Throughout his career in Delhi, therefore, Naik had refused to accept a salary and maintained himself on his small earnings from lectures, books and other writings. He first worked as Adviser (Primary Education) and then in several other capacities till he

became Member Secretary of the Education Commission (1964-66). He re-joined the Ministry as Adviser in 1966 and retired from active responsibilities in 1973. However, he continued to be Member-Secretary of the Central Advisory Board of Education and assisted the Ministry in the development of several programmes. He had the rare opportunity of working with nine Education Ministers: K. L. Shrimali, Humayun Kabir, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, M. C. Chagla, Triguna Sen, V. K. R. V. Rao, Siddharth Shankar Ray, Nurul Hasan and Pratap C. Chunder. As his good fortune would have it, all these Ministers trusted him and gave him full support. His work in Delhi brought him the opportunity to work with the State Governments to many of whom he became a formal or informal adviser. This period also marked his close association with the Planning Commission and especially with its successive Deputy Chairmen and members in charge of education. Naik's work assumed a national scope and character and his circle of friends widened in proportion. It included leading educationists and thinkers in all parts of the country, State Education Ministers, Secretaries and Directors of Education, and top ranking officials of the Central Government. Dr. D. S. Kothari who was Chairman of the Indian Education Commission considerably influenced Naik's thinking. Naik used to mention this gratefully. During this period, he had an opportunity to work with G. Parthasarathi, B. D. Nag Choudhury and Moonis Raza in building up the Jawaharlal Nehru University. He looked upon all these friendships with particular pride.

#### THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH (1967-78)

Concurrently with the work he was doing for the Ministry of Education, Naik had the unique opportunity to work as Chief Executive of the Indian Council of Social Science Research, an autonomous organisation of a national status. In November 1967, he was requested to implement the report of the V. K. R. V. Rao Committee on Social Science Research. Going through all the preliminary paces he was able to have the Indian Council of Social Science Research established in February 1969. He was then requested to become its first Member Secretary. He agreed to do so on a provisional basis till the Council was in a position to find someone else for the post. Due to various reasons beyond his

control, this short term assignment got prolonged year after year. But in 1977, he firmly informed the Council that he would in no case continue in the post beyond 31 March 1978 and the Council finally agreed to release him. The manner in which he built up the Council during its infant years is one of the finest tributes to Naik's commitment to scholarship, creative research and his vision about the future. Naik claimed that his nine years in the Council were of immense value for his personal development. During this period, he had the privilege of working under three distinguished chairmen, viz., Professor D. R. Gadgil, Professor M. S. Gore and Professor Rajni Kothari. He also had the opportunity to work with valued friends like Professor M. L. Dantwala, Professor D. T. Lakdawala, Professor M. N. Srinivas, Professor S. C. Dube, Professor K. N. Raj, Professor S. Chakravarty, Professor Ravi Matthai, Dr. Kamla Chowdhury, Professor V. S. Vyas, Professor Durganand Sinha and others.

#### THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION (1978-81)

On retirement from the position of Member Secretary of the Indian Council of Social Science Research in 1978, Naik turned his attention once again to the development of the Indian Institute of Education which he described as a dream that had floated into his vision in 1948 but still had to unfold itself fully. The re entry of Naik into the revival of the Institute transformed not only its original objectives but its total style of working. It became a significant innovation in institution building for achieving the goals of education for a modernising society. He visualised that in its new shape, "the major concern of the Institute will be to relate education meaningfully to the life, needs and aspirations of the people, to unravel the links between education and development, to promote the study of science and technology and especially the spread of science among the people and the cultivation of a rational, scientific temper, to create greater equality of educational opportunity, to increase the access of the underprivileged groups to education, and to use it as an instrument for making them aware of themselves and of the social reality around them, and helping them to organise themselves with a view to solving their day to day problems and improving their standard of living." To achieve this purpose, the Institute

was guided by him to lay special emphasis on working outside the formal educational system partly to educate public opinion and partly to bring pressure on the system as well as on working with progressive elements within 'the system in order to promote significant innovations and experimentation in education interrelated with development. He outlined a Five Year Plan for the Institute (1978-83), giving high priority to programmes of finding alternatives in educational development and building up collaborative resources throughout the country as well as linkages abroad, to the extent possible, and combining the efforts of a large number of intellectuals and social workers in this challenging enterprise. With his robust health and tremendous mental energy which often put to shame many of his juniors, he was confident of building up this pulsating dream to a self-sustaining level within a span of five years. After this was done, he thought he could turn to his other favourite dream, that of stepping into the villages once again to recapture the joy of being a free lance planner and reformer, even as he had been in his youthful days at Uppin Betigeri. When he contracted cancer in December 1980, he trimmed down the dreams. Still, he had hoped for a year or too of remission in which he would struggle to achieve the major substance of the first drama.

### WRITINGS

Naik was a fine scholar and at the same time a humanist. His compulsive concern for the education of the poor stimulated most of his writings on education. Universalisation of elementary education, therefore, was his main theme on which variations were constructed from the viewpoint of the historian, planner, administrator, researcher and a sensitive social worker fired with a missionary zeal, all of whom made up the curious amalgam that constituted Naik's personality. When he delivered a lecture on elementary education his statistics were impeccable and planning proposals most rational, but the tears that welled up in his eyes when he talked of the deprivation of the poor, humanised the disciplined scholar within him. His writings invariably reflect the same characteristics.. He drew naturally on his personal experience of having belonged to the rural poor and having worked among them as a primary and adult educator, to build

a philosophy of his own for educating them. But his theoretical formulations unfailingly resulted into practical propositions like multipoint entry and part time non formal education relevant to the learner's circumstances. In 1942, his first book on the subject, *Studies in Primary Education*, put forward a programme which would have, in his opinion; enabled the country to provide universal primary education for all children in about ten years. He elaborated this thought in several subsequent publications and particularly in *Elementary Education in India: The Unfinished Business* (1963) which was written when he received the Dadabhai Naoroji Award. A further development of his ideas got expression in *Elementary Education: A Promise to Keep* (1975) and *Some Perspectives on Non formal Education* (1977) which the radical thinker Ivan Illich considers to be the best book he has so far come across on the subject.

Educational history was Naik's first love. When he started working in villages in 1932, he began hunting for original sources on the development of education in India. He was so fascinated by what he found that he decided to write a history of education in the British period. Collaborating with his friend Syed Nurullah, he wrote in 1944 the first and most comprehensive history of modern Indian education. This was revised in 1951 and has become a classic on the subject and is used all over the world. Naik also published a shorter version of this book for students which is now in the sixth edition. In spite of his pressing duties Naik persisted in his search for original sources and brought out, along with collaborators, two volumes of selections from old educational records.

Ever since he started writing on education, planning, right from the institutional to the national level, was the theme of several of his publications. Over the last two years, his predilection for planning was turning towards finding alternatives to the existing system of education. This is apparent in his several essays and particularly in *Equality, Quality and Quantity : The Elusive Triangle in Indian Education* (1976). What amazed Naik's associates was not only the innovative ideas he generated but their irrefutable statistical and research base. His original training in mathematics was absorbed into his being and the amount of statistics he could produce from memory at



appropriate times was a marvel. When he drafted the Report of the Indian Educational Commission (1964-66) his capacity to bring about the marriage of relevant statistics with appropriate ideas won him everybody's admiration.

#### COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Writings of reports was a very peculiar hobby which Naik had become addicted to as a consequence of his membership of several committees and commissions. He justified this addiction by pointing out that if new ideas could be woven into the recommendations of official committees and commissions, they stood a fair chance of becoming concrete proposals for official action. The committees he worked on were varied and numerous, beginning in 1937 with the Provincial Boards of Primary Education and Adult Education in Bombay. Some of the significant committees on which he worked were: the Kher Committee on relationship between State Governments and local bodies in relation to the administration of primary education; the National Committee on the Education of Women of which Mrs. Durgabai Deshmukh was Chairman; the Primary Education Integration Committee of the old Bombay State of which he himself was Chairman; the Primary Education Commission of the Rajasthan State of which also he was Chairman; the Education Committee of the J & K State; and the First Review Committee of the NCERT. He was also, as stated already, an active member of the Central Advisory Board of Education and continued to be its Member Secretary since 1967 until his last days. The monumental report of the Indian Education Commission *Education and National Development*—which he drafted as its Member Secretary has been internationally recognised as a brilliant document.

On retirement from the Indian Council of Social Science Research in 1978, Naik joined the Indian Institute of Education as Honorary Professor. He was also the Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Institute. He had undertaken two important projects on which he was working. These were a study of "Educational Reform in India, 1921-80: An Evaluation" and proposals for "Educational Development in India (1980-200)". During 1978-80, he completed two outstanding books:

*The National Education Policy, 1947-78, and Education Commission and After* (since published).

#### INSTITUTION BUILDER

All along, Naik had been an assiduous institution builder. In every phase of his own development, he threw himself wholeheartedly into constructing structures for further development of ideas and programmes. The Dharwar Prathamik Shikshan Prasara Mandal, the Indian Institute of Education, Shri Mouni Vidyapeeth, and the Indian Council of Social Science Research are such landmarks. In his quiet but effective way, he also assisted a large number of his friends and colleagues in establishing or developing their own institutions. But to Naik, building up individuals was even more important than building up institutions. Throughout his life, therefore, he sought out and helped young and deserving persons. The number of individuals he thus assisted has been large. He took a great joy in the fact that many of them were playing important roles in different walks of life.

#### HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Naik was a man of versatile interests. Problems of health and medical services, especially for the rural areas, were his special interest. In October 1980 he completed drafting the now famous report on the health situation in India, viz. *Health for All*. This emerged from a programme he had initiated in the ICSSR, called "Alternatives in Health". His collaborators in this task were outstanding medical men like Dr. G. Gopalan, Dr. V. Ramalingaswamy, Dr. P. N. Wahi, Dr. P. N. Chuttani, Dr. N. H. Antic, and Dr. Raj Arole. He was the first, non medical person to deliver the *Lakshmanswami Mudaliar Oration* at the All India Medical Conference held at Chandigarh in 1977. It was mainly this Oration that formed the basis for the report *Health for All*. He was a member of the Srivastava Committee which made a breakthrough in the traditional thinking on health services and of the Gopalan Committee on Drug Addiction. In collaboration with his friends from the field of health, Naik hoped to assist in the formulation of a realistic alternative policy for the development of health and medical services for the country.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In 1950, when UNESCO invited him to write a study of compulsory primary education in India and to participate in a regional seminar on compulsory primary education held at Bombay in 1952, Naik's activities crossed their national boundaries. In 1959, he was invited again as consultant for the development of a UNESCO plan for the provision of universal elementary education in Asia. The plan he then prepared was formally adopted at the Karachi meeting of Asian Member States held in 1960 and came to be known as the *Karachi Plan*. This was further, discussed in a subsequent meeting held in Tokyo, in 1962, where he was present as a UNESCO consultant. It was at the Karachi meeting that Naik first met Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiaiah. Soon they became friends and between 1960 and 1972 he had several opportunities of working with Dr Adiseshiaiah in UNESCO's educational programmes. The meeting of African States in Addis Ababa in 1961, when a plan for the development of African education was adopted and the meeting of the Arab States held in Beirut for a similar purpose in 1967, were important for reshaping Naik's own thinking. His outstanding contributions at such meetings won international respect for his work and he began to be invited by international bodies to participate in discussions on educational development and planning. Among these, mention may be made of the International Institute of Educational Planning, Paris, and the Dam Hammarskjold Foundation, Uppsala (Naik was a member of its international Advisory Committee). Naik was one of the few educationists in India who have had large international contacts and whose advice was often sought by international agencies and friendly foreign countries. He had many close friends in the international community. These include Professor Gunnar Myrdal, Professor Ivan Illich, Professor Mary Jean Bowman, Professor C. Arnold Anderson, Dr. Harold Howe II, Professor Mrs. Rudolph, Professor H. L. Elvin, Mr. Majid Rahnema, Mr. J. F. McDougall, Mr. Asher Deleon, Professor Cyril E. Beeby, and Professor Ian Lister. Some of these eminent personalities contributed to a rich Festschrift volume '*The Social Context of Education Essays in Honour of Professor J. P. Naik*'. The volume was prepared when Naik completed seven decades of a highly productive life. Naik was a Consultant to the

World Bank also on educational matters. He was recently invited by the Regional Office of UNESCO, Bangkok, to hold discussions with the UNESCO staff about the future of education in Asia. During his last visit (November 1980) he discussed and outlined a proposal for long term educational planning in the Asian region.

After his return from Bangkok, around December 1980, it was discovered that he had contracted cancer of the oesophagus. His health began to fail. But it could not affect his strong frame of mind or his firm determination to work, which had won him the *Padmabhushan* award from the Government of India in 1974. He was working till the end of July 1981 on his favourite projects on 'Educational Reform' and Educational Development in India (1980-2000). Naik passed away in the early hours of Sunday, 80 August 1981. He would have entered his seventy fifth year on 5 September 1981.

Those who knew Naik from his school and college days often wondered how he could bring himself to spend nearly nineteen years in Delhi which, in style and spirit, was so far removed from rural life. Naik had always been a villager through and through in food, clothes, easy *camaraderie* with the simple and the indigent and disregard of what is known as social polish and highbrow etiquette. But Delhi, though not quite to his taste, contributed much toward the widening of his intellectual interests and contacts with other creative minds. Time and again, however, he expressed his longing to return to the rural setting. He also set his heart on building up the Indian Institute of Education at Pune, which he did, and on developing his favourite theme of *Alternatives in Education and Development*. Eventually, he hoped to live and work in a village just as he did in the first flush of his youthful idealism. There, undisturbed by the city's jar, he might have once again found a sure outlet for his multipronged energies which sought to build man and his environment together into a blend where rational vision blissfully merges with the poetic, and where the simple joys of life conquer the craving for possessions and power.

Times changed and so did Naik while garnering insights and wisdom from whatever he experienced and whomsoever he met. But it was not difficult for his friends to see that, if left to himself,

he would have entered another Uppin Betigeri even after a crowded interregnum of forty eight years, mixing with the villagers, talking excitedly about plans for change, sitting on the floor of a hut regaling himself on *jowar* bread and curds, entirely unmindful of how he looked in soiled *khadi* shorts and a shirt with an irreparable rent in its back. That was the real Naik, known simply as 'J.P.' to his friends who are legion.

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## Preface

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It is indeed a privilege and honour for us to have been assigned the task of collating the writings and articles of the founder of various educational systems which are in vogue in India, and even abroad, Prof. J.P.Naik. Prof. Naik had recognised as early as in 1940s that India is a vast country with large population of multiple caste, class, regional and religious dimensions, and as such a single educational system would not suit it. In order to provide education for the entire population he therefore advocated various types of educational systems. However, besides education, he was also concerned with the 'health programmes' for the entire population in general, but more so for the rural population who is deprived of even the basic necessities of health care facilities. Prof. J.P.Naik was well known to educationists all over the world as an outstanding visionary, planner and organiser. He was involved in setting up various institutions such as Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA/NUEPA), Mauni Vidyapeeth, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Indian Institute of Education (IIE), and others. He was the most outstanding single individual having the greatest influence on education reforms for developing countries in general and India in particular.

Prof. Naik's early life was full of struggles. He came from a poor rural family, and would have been dragged into the rural agricultural trap; but for his intelligence, love for education, and strong desire to help people, and our country, by devising methods of appropriate systems of education for rural as well as

urban folks. He had a brilliant academic career, and loved literature as well as mathematics. It was in his early college education years that he participated actively in India's liberation movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, and served a prison sentence. It was during his prison term that he gained good knowledge of medicine and medical practice, and helped the inmates. He launched the programme of 'Education for All, Health for All' and made every effort to make it successful. However, because of the circumstances prevailing then he had limited success. The eminent educationist Prof. A.R.Kamat writes about him, "In his last work, 'Education Commission and After', undertaken during the very last phase of his life, Naik frankly admits that the framework adopted in the Education Commission Report about education and development had basic weaknesses, since it did not even refer to the extreme poverty and deprivation in Indian Society, and the highly unequal distribution of earnings, wealth and political power - the fundamental problems of Indian Society, which need to be faced equally.... Naik's departure from the Indian educational scene has created a large void which cannot easily be filled. In a sense, it was the end of an epoch. It is for the on-going generations of Indian educationists to work for his idea of radical reconstruction of Indian education with a clearer perspective". It was indeed a great pleasure for one of us (ASB) to be his disciple.

'Collected Articles of Prof. J.P. Naik' has been compiled in three volumes. The first volume deals with his contributions in the fields of Primary Education, Elementary Education, Higher Education and Education for Rural Development. Volume No. II contains his contributions in the area of Policy Studies, and Volume No. III contains monographs concerning his contributions in educational development for scheduled castes and tribes, and his reflections and assessment for the future.

We are very thankful to the librarians of various institutions such as NCERT, NIEPA, ICSSR, JNU, IIE and others for providing us the necessary assistance in collecting the articles, speeches and reports for inclusion in these three volumes. One of us (ASB) is particularly grateful to Smt. Nirmal Malhotra. Librarian of NIEPA for personal help in procuring the documents from other institutions as well. Some of the documents were in the form of photocopies of articles whose originals could not be traced. Some

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Finally, on behalf of the editors as well as our Institute we express our sincere and special gratitude to Sudarshan Kcherry and Authorspress to publish these volumes in a record time.

*Editors*

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## Educational Planning for a Poor Country (1960)

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There are many who believe that a poor country does not need a plan or cannot have one. What can you plan, they ask, when there is nothing to plan with? On a similar basis, there are some who argue that the Planning Commission should be abolished and that India should now give up planning altogether. According to this group of thinkers, planning of education in the first three Five Year Plans was worthwhile because resources of a reasonable size were available. Now that the resources position is very unsatisfactory, they would prefer to abandon planning altogether. The obvious implication is that planning is necessarily an exercise for a time of plenty. I cannot share this view. Planning is essentially an exercise for a time of scarcity; and the greater the scarcity, the greater is the need for planning. A rich man can afford to live without planning his purchases or his menus for breakfast. But a poor man cannot live without planning every purchase and maybe, every meal. Similarly, a poor country needs planning more urgently than a rich country.

America has no national plan and no Planning Commission. Probably it does not need them. But India, cannot do without a Planning Commission or without Five Year Plans. I therefore think that the need for planning is greater now than at any time in the past for the very reason for which it is proposed to be abandoned, namely, the resources available to us have shrunk to very low levels. If they were to shrink further, the need for planning would become greater still and not less.

There is another important point to be noted in this context. What do we precisely mean when we observe that a poor country

does not have 'resources' to plan with? There are several types of resources. What is called a rich country in common parlance is one which has plenty of material resources; but its human resources may be limited. In a poor country, as generally understood, the material resources are limited, but there could be plenty of human resources. India is particularly rich in human material. We have only one per cent of world's GNP. But we have one-sixth of the world's population or its potential pool of talent. The basic conditions between the rich and poor countries being thus totally different, it is obvious that the techniques of planning in one cannot be applicable to another. For instance, waste can be tolerated in a rich country because resources are plentiful. In a poor country, on the other hand, one cannot afford any waste at all. In a rich country, physical resources are used to make up for shortcomings of material resources. Unfortunately, this important point is often lost sight of and a common mistake committed by the developing countries is that they adopt, rather thoughtlessly, the techniques of planning and development which they find in use in the developed countries. This absurd attempt generally leads to frustration and create an impression that planning itself is wrong or unwanted.

A good illustration of this was brought to my notice recently. The principal of a college where I went to speak on educational planning was apologetic about the temporary pandal in which the lecture was to be given, and regretted very much that the college did not yet have an assembly hall. I do agree that, like educational institutions in rich countries, we too should also aspire to have an assembly hall in a college. It will cost some lakhs of rupees and we will use it only for a few hours in a year. The cost of utilisation per hour of the assembly hall would therefore run into fantastic figures. But how does that matter? As Dr. Kothari says, "It is always easier to spend money than thought, especially when it is someone else's thought, especially when it is someone else's money." But let me raise an important issue; what is wrong with a pandal for a meeting? It may be that it costs some money to put it up on every occasion. But this amount will be small in comparison with the cost of the assembly hall or even its maintenance; and it has the added advantage of providing some work for poor people. I will certainly have no objection to assembly halls when we shall be able to afford them. But until that

time is reached, I would prefer pandals, and where even pandals are not available I would welcome open air meetings which can easily be arranged at a convenient time of the day and in appropriate months of the year. It is in situations of this type that I am reminded of the valuable advice given by Mahatma Gandhi. He used to say; (1) India is poor country; and (2) do not run it like a rich country till it actually becomes a rich country. These are simple things no doubt. But we often forget them and land ourselves in difficulties.

In my opinion, the developing countries need to develop 'the art, science and philosophy of planning for a poor country'. They cannot get this expertise from the rich countries. You know the well-known story (perhaps apocryphal) of Marie Antoinette who advised people to eat cake if bread was not available. Here is an example of a well-intentioned rich person trying to plan for poor people and one can easily see how absurd the result is. The attempt of a rich country to try to plan for poor countries often becomes equally ridiculous. A good example of this is the American advice that a poor country like India should establish four year integrated courses in special non-university institutions like the Regional Colleges to solve the problem of her teacher education. This technique is of doubtful utility and too costly to be repeatable. It will never have any significant impact on our system of teacher education and the immense resources that were wasted on it could have been utilised to vitalise the 250 training institutions that serve the real needs of this country. I would, therefore, suggest that it is for poor countries themselves to work together and develop new techniques of planning which can be of assistance to them. As the old proverb goes; it is the poor that help the poor.

## II

Educational planning in a developing society is subject to several limitations which will have to be kept in view while formulating what I have described as 'the art, science and philosophy of planning for a poor country. Some of the more important of these are mentioned below.

- 1) In absolute terms, the financial resources available for planning in a developing country are limited. For instance,

India spends about Rs. 16 or a little more than US \$2 dollars per head of population on education, while America spends about 180 dollars per head of population for her education. In fact, what we spend on education is probably equal to what an average American spends on sedatives or sleeping pills. The gap between the two levels of expenditure is frighteningly wide and as time passes, it is tending to become wider still.

- 2) In spite of their low level of investment in education in absolute terms, it has to be remembered that the poor countries are making a relatively more intensive effort to develop education than the rich ones. For instance, India is spending about 3 per cent of her national dividend on education when the total national dividend is only about 80 dollars. As against this, America is spending 6 per cent of her national dividend of about 3000 dollars. The intensity of the effort to invest in education is related to 'savings' or the gap between total national dividend and the minimum required for subsistence. This gap is so small in India and so wide in America that one would be justified in concluding that an investment of 3 per cent of the national dividend on education in India (at the 80 dollar level) implies a far harder effort on the part of the people than that of 6 per cent of the national dividend in the US (at the 3000 dollar level).
- 3) Money is undoubtedly a very difficult thing to find in a poor country; and yet, paradoxical as it may seem, finances for the development of education are often more plentifully available in poor countries than 'real' resources in terms of materials. For instance, it is easier to get money in India for construction of buildings than either cement or steel. Grants for scientific equipment or libraries are obtained far more easily than the equipment itself or good books. This is all the more so where the equipment or books have to be imported. In other words, in planning for a poor country, there are often severe restraints of physical resources which are even more stringent than the monetary ones.
- 4) This paucity of available resources in money or materials for purposes of planning in a poor country is only equalled

by the absolute immensity of the tasks it is required to perform. For instance, in the US, the problem of adult illiteracy does not exist. Not only primary, but even secondary education, has been made universal. In expansion, therefore, the country has to concentrate mainly on two areas—higher and adult education. The standards of education are also high so that the qualitative tasks before the educational system are also not formidable. And yet, for the performance of these residual tasks, the country has immense resources available. On the other hand, India has a far faster task to perform than the US. She has to liquidate a mass illiteracy of about 70 per cent. She has not yet been able to provide even universal primary education and the expansion of secondary and higher education is as yet very limited. The quality of her schools is far from satisfactory; and in every other important respect, it has still great leeway to make. For all this immense task, however, the resources available to her are pitifully small in comparison to those of the US. This is yet another point of contrast: the gap between 'needs' and 'resources' is far wider in the developing countries than in the developed ones.

- 5) The rich countries which have now come to have well-developed educational systems related to productivity find themselves in a 'golden' circle. Because they are rich, they can afford to invest large amounts in educational development. This leads to considerable increase in national income and, in its turn, enables the country to make a still larger investment in education and so on. In contrast to this, a poor country is caught, sooner than later, in a 'vicious circle'. Because it is poor, it is not in a position to invest much in education and to develop it in a big way; and as its educational system is generally unrelated to productivity, even such investment as it makes in education does not necessarily lead to a proportional increase in national income. This failure to develop the educational system in a poor country affects the quality of its human resources and the nation tends to become poorer still.

In view of these fundamental limitations, the system of educational planning for a poor country will have to be based on the following five basic principles amongst others:

- 1) *Cost of Construction*: Poor countries often adopt educational plans without due regard to the cost involved. As resources available to them are very limited and have to be used in the most economical manner, every scheme they undertake should be submitted to rigorous cost benefit analysis. Alternative uses for the investment of available resources will have to be carefully weighed and priority will always have to be accorded to those programmes which yield a better result for a given investment or require a smaller investment to produce the same result.
- 2) *Intensive Utilisation of Available Resources*: Since funds are limited in poor countries, they have to take special steps to ensure that all available resources are most intensively utilised at the existing level of investment. In fact, it should be a matter of policy in planning that additional investment to ensure a better return from existing facilities should be accorded high priority; and subject to this preservation, new investments should be permitted only when the maximum possible utilisation of facilities has been obtained at the existing level of investment.
- 3) *Research for the Development of Less Costly Techniques*: An important contribution of science is to make it possible, through research and mass production, to produce things of higher quality at lesser cost. Such a programme has not yet received the attention it really deserves and it is tacitly assumed that better education is necessarily costlier or what is even worse, that costlier education is necessarily better. The rich countries have not seriously felt the need for such research. But the poor countries cannot do without it.
- 4) *Selective Approach*: There is a general tendency, while planning for education, to undertake too many schemes, and to spread the available resources over too wide an area. This always leads to waste and it is, therefore, necessary to adopt a selective approach on the basis of rational and well-defined priorities. This is necessary even

in rich countries because there is always a gap between needs and resources. But in poor countries, this gap is wide and the need to determine priorities becomes both extremely urgent and difficult.

- 5) *Human Effort*: The vicious circle in which poor countries find themselves—poverty leading to non-development of education which, in its turn, leads to still greater poverty—can best be broken through human effort and hard, dedicated and sustained work on the part of all concerned. In fact, as stated already, poor countries have deliberately to utilise greater human effort to make up for the shortfall of material and monetary resources.

These five basic principles are discussed in some detail below.

### III

Let me begin with the idea of cost-consciousness. Since resources are scarce, poor countries have to use them in the most economical manner. But this cost-consciousness has not been much in evidence in our Five-Year Plans. On the other hand, we have developed an expenditure-orientation to our plans under which the progress of education is judged more by expenditure incurred than by any other criteria. Consequently, there is often a competition in spending more and plans are undertaken without reference to the cost involved; no cost-benefit analysis of any major schemes has been undertaken. Sometimes even an actual preference is shown for schemes wherein money can be spent easily and plentifully. Such techniques of planning have no place anywhere, not even in the richest of countries, and even if they had no poor country, least of all India, can afford these luxuries.

Some illustrations may be given of the general disregard of cost-considerations which is a feature of our educational planning.

*Size and Location of Educational Institutions*: There is a close relationship which may vary from one category of institutions to another, between the size, cost per student and efficiency of an educational institution. There is, therefore, an optimum size for each category of institutions at which its efficiency is the best and the cost per student is the lowest. This important aspect of the

problem has received little attention so far and there are far too many institutions of too small a size that prove to be very costly. Here are some illustrations of what I have in mind.

- a) In Madhya Pradesh, the policy adopted is that every secondary school must be a higher secondary school. Where we can have an enrolment of about 300-400, the cost per student is reduced to its lowest level, and there can be no financial objection to this proposal. But if it is decided to convert every secondary school to the higher secondary pattern, and if rural schools, which generally have an enrolment of less than 100, are made higher secondary, the cost per student mounts up to prohibitive levels because each school needs a minimum staff of six lecturers. The proper policy to be adopted in this country is to adopt the ten-year school as the ordinary pattern, especially in rural areas, and to convert only selected schools to the higher secondary pattern.
- b) *Sanskrit Departments in Affiliated Colleges:* A subject like Sanskrit is not popular at the university stage, but for cultural and other reasons, we have to make an effort to provide adequate facilities for its study. But this does not mean that we should totally disregard enrolments or provide these facilities in every college in a city or a big town. Recently, I made a study of Sanskrit Departments in colleges of Bombay city and found that they were all small and the cost per student was as high as about Rs. 2,000 per year or even more (as against the average cost of Rs. 400 per annum for the popular subjects) and that the cost could be lowered to about Rs. 500 or so if these facilities could be provided in one or two institutions only instead of being scattered over eight or ten. A proper planning of facilities for Sanskrit education can thus save a lot of money. But these aspects of the problem have received no adequate attention so far.
- c) *Adoption of Costly Patterns:* It is true that we shall have to make larger investments to improve quality. But one has to make an intensive effort to identify elements which really contribute to quality and ensure that unnecessary expenditure unconnected (or only thinly connected) with quality is avoided. One concedes the point that an IIT will

cost more than an ordinary engineering college. But one does not feel sure that all the expenditure that is now incurred on IITs really necessary for quality. In fact, I have a feeling that there is a good deal of snobbish or prestige expenditure incurred on these institutions which can be easily cut out with no adverse effect on quality and, in some cases, with positive gain. The standards that we adopt in the construction of our buildings, especially in higher education, are often based on ostentation and one cannot help feeling that our expenditure on buildings can be substantially reduced. There is no gainsaying the need to build up high quality postgraduate departments in universities. But this does not necessarily justify over-investment in university buildings. The heights of the university towers are not always proportional to the academic development in the classrooms.

The regional colleges of education themselves are a good example of our lack of cost-consciousness. There are two patterns of teacher-education: the integrated pattern adopted in the US where the professional education of teachers is combined with their general education at the undergraduate stage and in UK pattern where professional education is provided, after the first degree. There is no reason to assume any marked superiority in the US pattern over the UK one, so as to justify the large investment needed in the former. And yet we undertook this plan of eating cake when bread is not available, regardless of our capacity to generalise it. We also did not weigh the advantages of starting these courses in universities with good science departments already in existence. This would have been far cheaper in cost and much better in quality. Instead, we started them in new non-university institutions like the regional colleges where everything had to be started from scratch and where costs were bound to be prohibitively high. What is worse, we did not even utilise this opportunity to do something different from what the universities were doing, something which is really integrated – instead of a mere repetition of the university courses at greater cost and perhaps with less efficiency. There can hardly be another such example where the intellectual inputs were kept at the minimum and monetary ones at the maximum. This is precisely what planning for a poor country should not be.

## IV

The resources available to the educational system are by no means plentiful and there is an urgent need to make larger investments in education. But even a casual study of our educational system shows, not so much the lack of resources as the underutilisation of even such resources as already exist. In fact, the extent of underutilisation is often so flagrant as to seem almost criminal.

Some illustrations—particularly the utilisation of buildings and equipment—will show what I have in mind. Some institutions do not have adequate and satisfactory buildings. But can we say that all the existing buildings are fully and intensively utilised? The answer is definitely no! Studies made by the Education Commission show that the vast majority of education buildings are utilised only for about five to six hours per day. In most buildings, the utilisation of different rooms shows considerable variations and, in several instances, room after room is used only for a few hours a week. The laboratories and the libraries, which should really be used for at least 10 to 12 hours a day and for all days of the week and all the months of the year (including the vacations) are used for a few hours a day on working days only. But the educational buildings and hostels remain largely unutilised in vacations because no useful vacation projects are generally organised. These general observations will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to equipment as well. A good deal of equipment, sometimes of a costly type, often remains unutilised for want of proper maintenance. Even when it is in working order, the utilisation is far from intensive. Given a careful plan, it is possible to use it more intensively and over longer periods.

Several imaginative headmasters of secondary schools, whom I know personally, have devised programmes for a better utilisation of their existing facilities at the cost of very little additional investment. I give below a few examples which come to my mind.

- 1) One important means of raising standards, especially with regard to children from the poorer classes or slum areas in cities, is to provide them with better conditions for study. They do not generally have all the textbooks that are needed. Most of them live in small tenements where they do not get adequate space or quiet which are so essential

for good study. They also receive no guidance at home because their parents are generally less educated than themselves. What is needed to improve the attainments of these children is to provide them with all the textbooks, some individual guidance and a quiet place where they can do their home work undisturbed. This does not necessarily require heavy additional investment. A friend of mine has designed the building of a secondary school in such a way that a number of beds are built into the walls, as in a railway compartment. All the classrooms in the building can also be used as dormitories. The additional expenditure in this type of construction was very meagre, about Rs.50 per bed. But it enabled him to invite the poor children from slum areas who attend school to live on the premises. They go home only for their meals. As a rule, they come to the school after their supper at 8 pm, study till 10 or 11 pm and again in the morning. Then they go home at about 10 am, have their meals and come back at 11 am when school begins. They remain in the school till 5 pm play till about 6 or 6.30 pm and then go home for supper. One or two teachers remain present in the school at night and again in the morning to provide guidance to students and are suitably remunerated. There is a good textbook library in the school so that all students have easy access to the text books that they need. The additional expenditure on this programme is very small – it works out to about Rs. 20 per child per year, - but the results show a magnificent improvement in the attainment of these students.

- 2) Another example is of an interesting vacation programme which is being tried out by some secondary schools in Bombay. These are attended by children from the lower middle or working classes who are too poor to send their children outside the city during the summer vacation. Moreover, they generally live in such small and crowded houses that they are virtually compelled to wander on the streets throughout the day when their school has its vacation. To meet the special needs of such children who form the bulk of their enrolment, these enterprising headmasters convert their school buildings into a hostel in



the summer vacation. The children who want to avail themselves of this programme are allowed to spend their entire time on the school campus, going home for meals only. A number of teachers work with them supervising their reading, guiding their studies and providing opportunities to them for play or the cultivation of hobbies. The only expenditure involved is on the remuneration of teachers and some material and this works out to about Rs.10 per student for the entire vacation. But the advantages of the programme are immense. The students feel greatly refreshed and improve in their studies.

- 3) Yet another interesting programme has been developed by a friend of mine, a teacher in Poona University. He uses psychological tests and identifies the most talented children in all the secondary schools in Poona city. He then brings them together and arranges special guidance and teaching for them, with the help of some of the best teachers available, in the last year of their school. The results have been outstandingly good and the expenditure is comparatively small. There is no reason why attempts of this type to identify talent at a fairly early age, say about 13 or 14 years and to develop it intensively, should not be made in every city.
- 4) There are several teachers I know who organise a number of vacation programmes, not only for children from their schools but also for those from other schools in the neighbourhood and even for non-attending children who can participate with advantage. For instance, several of them run special libraries for children during the summer and winter vacations and these are availed of enthusiastically by thousands of children. Some teachers keep the craft-sheds working in the vacations to provide scope for the development of hobbies. In some schools, the laboratories are kept open in vacations in order that teachers and students of primary schools in the neighbourhood, who do not have these facilities, may come to receive instruction and do practical work. There are schools which run circulating libraries for schools in their neighbourhood and I have known of one which sends round its film projector to schools in the neighbourhood.

In one State, workshop facilities are not generally provided separately to individual schools but are created in central places and shared by a number of neighbouring schools.

- 5) Intensive utilisation of facilities will have, as indicated above, important advantages for students of the institutions concerned. But they can also be so utilised for two other purposes of greater significance. The first is to make the facilities in the educational institutions available to non-student youth who desire to keep up their interest in studies and personal advancement; and the second is to make them available to the adult community for programmes of continuing education. In fact, every educational institution can become an effective community centre and serve both the young and the old in its neighbourhood through a more intensive use of available facilities and with very little additional investment. But unfortunately, these programmes have not received much attention so far.

I might close this discussion with a quotation from the Report of the Education Commission.

*"Adequate Utilisation of Institutional Facilities:* Since it is very costly to provide and maintain the physical plant of education institutions, it becomes necessary to utilise it as fully as possible, for the longest time on each day and for all the days in the year, by making suitable administrative arrangements. Teachers and students would continue to have their own hours of work and vacation as recommended above. The libraries, laboratories, workshops, craft sheds, etc. should be open all the year round and should be utilised for at least eight hours a day, if not longer. Special vacation programmes should be arranged to utilise institutional facilities for community service, adult education, temporary hostels for day students, enrichment programmes for gifted students and supporting programmes for retarded students. It is not necessary to indicate all the different ways in which the institutional facilities could be utilised all the year round. If an understanding is developed that education institutions are like temples of learning and should never remain closed and if a proper climate for sustained work is created, teachers, students and the local communities will themselves

discover innumerable methods of utilising school facilities to the maximum potential throughout the year. When it is difficult to expand educational facilities adequately and a waste to under-utilise existing resources, such programmes demand urgent attention."

## V

In a poor country, it is absolutely essential to keep down the unit costs consistent with maintenance of standards. Educational research organised on proper lines can be of great use from this point of view.

Let me take an interesting example, namely, the teaching methods in primary schools. The methods of teaching which we now adopt in our primary schools and generalise through our training institutions have largely been borrowed from the industrially advanced countries of the West because we have not yet carried out any worthwhile research to discover new techniques which are more appropriate to our conditions. But these methods are suitable only for classes of small size, which have now become general in these countries. These countries can afford classes of small size, partly because of the ample resources available and partly because they have a low birth rate and consequently a comparatively smaller number of children to educate. But the conditions in the developing countries are just the opposite. They have meager resources and a high birth rate which results in their having a comparatively larger number of children to educate. These countries are, therefore, under a financial compulsion to adopt a larger class size. This will, however, not be possible unless methods of teaching appropriate to larger class sizes are evolved and universally adopted.

I must however qualify this statement in certain respects. I do not mean that there is a method of teaching appropriate to any size of class and I do concede the point that there is an upper limit to a class size beyond which the efficiency of teaching begins to be adversely affected. There is also a lower limit to a class size which is generally dictated by financial and administrative considerations and the efficiency of teaching does not necessarily improve when the class sizes fall below a critical level. But between these two extremes which cover a fairly wide range, there

is no special sanctity about any particular class size. There are certain methods of organisation and teaching which can be used only if the total size of the class is small, while there are others which can be used, without any deterioration to standards, in classes of a much larger size. If the proper techniques are adopted, it is thus possible to obtain fairly good results in any class size, within the given range, which might be found to be financially necessary.

It is possible to show mathematically that there is a close direct relationship between the birth rate and class size at the primary stage, where universal education has to be provided. Hence countries with a large birth rate will be under a financial and administrative compulsion to adopt a larger class size. This is so in all developing countries and especially in India. Unfortunately, the teaching profession in this country has not accepted the large class as an inescapable necessity and it is not also trained academically to handle it in an efficient manner. Yet the average situation in the country is such that six teachers out of ten are called upon to face classes of very big size. It is this contrast between the training of teachers and their expectations on the one hand, and the needs of the social and economic realities on the other, and not the large class size as such, that cause the present malaise in India. If we could only accept a large class-size as an economic necessity for the next 10 to 15 years, if we could concentrate on the evolution of teaching methods suitable for large classes, and if we could train our teachers properly in the handling of these methods, the educational standards would materially improve in spite of the large size of the classes.

There are several other low-cost programmes for the development of education which we can adopt with advantage. For instance, programmes of part-time education and correspondence courses will have to be developed in a big way both at the secondary and the university stages. This will reduce recurring as well as non-recurring expenditure and, what is even more important, make educational facilities available to all those persons who desire to educate themselves further but cannot afford to join full-time educational institutions. Development of programmed instruction can be another technique which can help us to spread education and to improve its quality at a comparatively small cost.

The developing countries have limited resources no doubt. But they rightly aspire to create an educational system which is comparable to that in the industrially advanced countries of the West, both in coverage and in quality. They will have no resources to create such an educational system if they were also to imitate Western techniques which are generally costly, and beyond the reach of poor nations. In fact, any attempt to create a western system of education with all its objectives, programmes and techniques, in a poor eastern country is as absurd as that of trying to force an elephant into a whisky bottle. The only way out, therefore, is for the developing countries to develop low-cost techniques within their reach, which can enable them to catch up with the educational systems of the industrially advanced nations in quantity and in quality. In this context, I can do no better than quote from the address of Dr. D.S. Kothari to the Education Commission at its inaugural function on 2 October, 1964. He said:

"It is important to recognise that one of the characteristics of science is that things of quality should not necessarily be expensive. If enough thought is devoted, it should be possible to have education of quality and yet cheap enough to be within our means. Science brings today within the reach of the common man things which at one time were not available to be very rich. The same can apply to education, but to bring this about would need hard work and much serious thinking and research into the process of education. The new techniques and instruments of education, such as Correspondence Courses, Programmed Learning, Audio-Visual Aids, can be of great value to us; but much of the new techniques required will have to be discovered and developed by ourselves. In fact in this matter we can and ought to be able to do more than the advanced countries. I am reminded of what my former teacher at Cambridge, Lord Rutherford, the pioneer of Nuclear Physics, said when he was told that America was going ahead in Nuclear Physics because they have a lot of money. He was asked what England should do. He replied in the robust way of his: 'Americans have money, we do not have it, and so we have got to think.' There is no substitute for hard and serious thinking; and with sustained and serious thinking and with sustained and serious effort, we should be able to go a long way even with our meager resources and capital. This perhaps explains why the Minister has appointed the

Commission. Its real justification will be if we could do hard and realistic thinking so that the education we need to meet our requirements – material, cultural and spiritual – could also be brought within our reach."

## VI

Let me now come to the fourth important technique of planning, namely, the selective approach in the development of educational institutions. In a poor country, the resources available are limited and the number of educational institutions is disproportionately large. It is, therefore, not possible to improve all educational institutions; and it is also not desirable to improve none of them. The only rational way out therefore is to select some institutions for development in the first instance, and to increase their number as more resources become available. Theoretically, therefore, a poor country has no alternative to the adoption of a selective approach in the development of its educational institutions.

And yet, whenever this idea of a selective development of educational institutions is put forward, there is strong opposition from every quarter. The egalitarians oppose it on the ground that it is undemocratic, that it will discriminate in favour of the haves and against the have-nots, and that it will widen the inequalities in the existing system by making the good schools better and the poor schools poorer. The politicians oppose it because they would prefer a system which enables them to distribute favours to as many institutions as possible without being called upon to answer awkward questions about priorities or principles. The administrators also oppose it on the ground that the present system based on a few simple rule-of-thumb principles is easier to administer and that a system of selective development where they are required to use their judgment and discretion is likely to expose them, in spite of their best efforts, to charges of 'casteism', favouritism or even corruption. What is worse, the educational institutions themselves oppose it with great vehemence. The reason is quite understandable. Each institution tries to weigh the chances of its being selected for special development under such a programme; and if it finds that such chances are bleak – these will necessarily be so for the vast majority of institutions – it generally decides to oppose the idea

itself. Consequently, the proposal is voted down by a large majority, the weakest institutions generally playing the most vociferous role in shouting down the innovation. It is significant to remember that the Education Commission's idea of selected development of a few universities was most vehemently opposed by the universities themselves. Even the good institutions are not enthusiastic about it because they feel that this move which is initiated ostensibly to support them, may ultimately be subverted by politicians and other influences to benefit underserving institutions with a political pull in preference to those institutions whose only strength lies in the excellence of their work. All things considered, it soon becomes evident to the planner that the selective development of educational institutions has no friend in any worthwhile quarters.

How can we meet this situation? In my opinion, the opposition to the selective approach is based, partly upon some wrong applications of the selective approach in our recent educational history, and partly upon certain misconceptions about the problem. If, therefore, we can dispel these misapprehensions through proper presentation and apply the techniques of the selective approach in the right way, there is every possibility that the present opposition to the proposal will disappear and be replaced by strong popular support. This is what we should try to do and. I shall indicate some ways in which this can be attempted.

It may be convenient to begin with one or two 'don'ts'. My first suggestion is that a selective approach should not adopt the planning techniques of what I might designate as the 'Anglo-Indian Suburbs'. The British bureaucrats who ruled India found that they had to live and work in towns and cities most of which were unplanned and dirty, and that they were also required to pay a few visits to villages which were even more insanitary. The idea of improving conditions of life in all the villages, towns and cities of India was something which they always shrank from as an impossible achievement. They, therefore, concentrated their efforts on creating artificial islands of prosperity in the country, in which they could live and work happily and forget the dirt, disease and destitution in the remaining areas. They thus created new Anglo-Indian suburbs for themselves – New Delhi for the

Government of India and Civil Lines and Cantonments for almost all other cities and towns – and beautifully located, well-furnished and well maintained Dak Bungalows and Rest and Circuit Houses to dot the entire countryside. This was an easy programme to implement and not very costly to administer and yet it gave them all the advantages of being able to live in islands of prosperity and thereby ignore the poverty and misery that was India.

This attempt of escape into artificial and unnatural islands of prosperity can be seen in education also. Take, for instance, the public schools. A Public School is undoubtedly a good institution. But what role does it precisely play in education? The number of public schools is very small – about 50 with a total enrolment of about 25,000. Their cost is also fabulously high so that they are beyond the reach of all but the very rich families. The public schools therefore are like an artificial island of prosperity in education, which help the very rich people to get good education for their children and forget the thousands of other schools in the country which maintain such low standards. The public schools are like skyscrapers in the midst of millions of hovels. But any number of such skyscrapers will not be able to hide the misery and poverty of the millions of huts that surround them.

I am afraid that this escapist policy of building up a few giants while allowing the rest of the society to be pigmies will not work. For us, a better planning technique is indicated by Browning's prayer in *Fra Lippo Lippi*:

Make no more giants, God!  
Raise up the whole race at once.

The creation of a few peaks of excellence here and there cannot inspire the entire educational system to move upwards. Very often, they become a source of despair because they are so obviously beyond the reach of the average institution. What is worse, the resources spent on building them up reduce the funds available to other institutions to such an extent that the pace of their development is reduced even further.

These considerations can be applied to the improvement of teacher education in India. The main objective should be to raise, as soon as practicable, the standard of each one of our training

institutions – their number is about 250 at present. There is a place for the creation of a few pace-setting institutions in this programme. But the pace should be repeatable and should inspire and help the others to follow them. The Regional Colleges, as they have now been constituted, do not qualify themselves for this role. They are very costly ventures and unrepeatable. I doubt their claim to be considered as peaks of excellence. Their expenditure is so high that it can never be possible for the average training institution to reach it. What is worse, the establishment of these institutions had definitely prevented us from making an earnest effort to improve the training institutions in the country. I very strongly feel that if large resources which have been sunk in these white elephants had been made available for the improvement of the training institutions for secondary teachers, the cause of education in the country would have been promoted more fruitfully.

There is a second 'don't' which I would emphasise: in developing selected institutions: care should be taken to see that quality does not become allied to privilege. The facilities offered to educational institutions selected for qualitative improvement should be available to all on the basis of equality and not restricted to a privileged few. The Regional Colleges of Education are not fortunately open to this charge. But the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are. The Education Commission made a study to find out who gets admission to the IITs. The data showed that 87 per cent of the students who are admitted to the IITs belong to families whose monthly income is more than Rs. 500. In other words, 87 per cent of the admission go to the top one-half per cent of the population. Do we seriously allege that there is no talent in the remaining 99.5 per cent of the population of the country? Are they merely the pariahs who have to exist on the charity of the great ones? It is also interesting to note that 50 per cent of the students who got admission to some IITs came from English-medium schools whose enrolment is less than one per cent should get 50 per cent of the admissions to the IITs? This is where one sees privilege and quality getting tied up together. Who sends their children to the English-medium schools? It is the senior Government servants, rich businessmen, and others who form a small top-class coterie. It is the children of this privileged group who are admitted to the IITs and are able to get big jobs

in due course. So a small top-circle of society is helped to perpetuate its privilege under the name of quality.

I stand for quality, but the poor people also must have a share in this quality. I have no objection to someone eating cake every day provided I also get a bite at them now and then. But if I am not to get any cake at all, I will certainly be irritated, and try to see that no one will ever have cake. This revolt will come up amongst the poor people if quality and privilege are always allied. Remember that these ivory towers which we are creating are all built on sand because the common people have no stake in them. If this separation between the masses and quality continues, if privilege and quality always remain together, the people of this country will rise in revolt one day and will throw out both quality and privilege.

I now come to the positive aspect of the problem and shall indicate a few criteria which are essential for the successful implementation of a policy of the selective development of educational institutions.

- 1) It must be remembered that the ultimate objective is to develop all educational institutions and that a programme of selective development is proposed as a means of reaching this objective as quickly as possible. The programme of selective development should therefore be so designed that it helps to hasten the general development of the system as a whole and that, under no circumstance does it hinder such development.
- 2) The first round of institutions selected for development must be sufficiently large to meet all legitimate aspirations. The Education Commission, for instance, recommended that 10 per cent of the institutions in a given category should be selected for development.
- 3) The level of development visualised should not be so high as to be beyond the reach of the average institution. In fact, the cost per pupil in the fully developed institutions should be about thrice that in an ordinary institution. This will make the experiment repeatable in the sense that excellence of this type could be expanded to other instances with comparative ease and in a reasonably short time.

- 4) Simultaneously with the launching of the experiment, a complementary scheme should also be launched under which institutions not selected in the first round can still be assisted to develop their potential and can thus hope that they too may get into the selected group if they show performance and promise. Similarly, the selected institutions should also be given to understand that their selection is not a once-and-for-all-time affair and that it is contingent upon continued good performance. In other words, the category of selected institutions should be an open and ever-widening community into which members not selected at a given stage can hope to get admission upon fulfilment of certain conditions just as members once selected may also be compelled to go out for failure to comply with these conditions.
- 5) The admission to institutions thus selected for development should be made with due regard to the principles of social justice and every care should be taken to ensure that this attempt to improve quality does not get allied to privilege.
- 6) The institutions selected for development will naturally have better facilities than many others. It should be an objective of policy to enable these institutions to share their facilities with others. It should be an objective of policy to enable these institutions to share their facilities with others. For instance, it may not be immediately possible to give a film projector, a good library, or a good laboratory to every school. But when these facilities are created in selected institutions, it should be possible to develop programmes under which such facilities can be shared by other institutions in the neighbourhood.
- 7) The scheme will have to be administered with vision, imagination and impartiality. The selection of schools for special development should be on the basis of academic criteria and receive the support of the academic community. This will create a healthy competition between educational institutions in developing excellence.

The point which I would emphasize is this: There is no escape in a poor country like India from adopting the selective approach for

development of educational institutions. It is unfortunate that the strategy adopted for development of selected educational institutions in the past was wrong and its disastrous consequences have made people suspicious in the programme itself. But in the larger interests of education, the existing suspicions and apprehensions about this technique have to be overcome through implementation on the right lines. We should make it clear to all concerned that this technique is really equivalent to what is often described as 'corn-seed technology' according to which excellence is first bred in some institutions through a concentration of human and material resources and then extended to other institutions. In fact, if properly implemented, this technique is the shortest way in practice to improve all educational institutions; and far from allying itself with privilege, it actually increases the chances of the access of the underprivileged sections of society of good education.

## VII

This brings me to the last technique of planning for a poor country, namely, emphasis on human effort. I said earlier that the developing countries now find themselves in a vicious circle; they cannot make adequate investments in education because they are poor; and since their educational system continues to be unreformed and undeveloped, they tend to become poorer still. This vicious circle can only be broken through dedication and human effort. Idealism is thus needed, now more than ever, and the only substitute we can have for hard work is still harder work. Unfortunately, the significance of these programmes is not realised. But planning for a poor country cannot succeed unless it emphasizes sustained hard work.

I should like to make two concrete suggestions in this regard. The first is that a climate of sustained hard work should be created in all educational institutions by increasing the number of working and instructional days and by lengthening the working day. The Education Commission pointed out that 'there is considerable variation, from area to area, in the total number of working days in a year – these range from 172 to 309 at the school stage and from 120 to 240 at the university stage. The number of holidays given within a school year shows even larger variations – from 20 to 75 at the school stage and from 4 to 49 at the university



stage. Similarly, the total duration of vacations varied from 86 to 84 days at the school stage and from 62 to 187 at the university stage. The days utilised for examinations (inclusive of preparatory leave) vary from 10 to 77 and the loss on account of celebrations such as foundation days, annual functions of societies, etc., is sometimes as high as 40 to 60 days in a year. These facts are a sad reflection on the efficiency of the educational system; and the general under-utilisation which they represent in a developing economy like ours is tantamount to an unpardonable waste of scarce resources. We, therefore, recommend that the number of instructional days in a year should be increased to about 234 (or 39 weeks) for schools (report, p. 38). I would therefore, strongly support the following recommendations of the Commission on this subject:

It should be ensured that the minimum number of instructional days should not be less than 234 a year for schools and 216 a year for colleges. This can be done by introducing two reforms:

- 1) The first is to cut down other holidays which are now as many as 35 or even more in a year. The general experience is that they serve no useful purpose and merely disturb the work of educational institutions. We recommend, therefore, that these should be drastically cut down to ten (which also includes three days for unexpected events). In our opinion, there is no need to close an educational institution on a religious holiday. Nor is it necessary for instance, to close it on birthdays or death anniversaries of great Indians; the time could be better utilised in working hard for national development.
- 2) The second is to fix an upper limit in each given year, for the loss of working days to instruction due to all causes including examinations – 21 days in schools and 27 days in colleges. (Report, p. 39).

Similarly, it is also necessary to lengthen the working days and to utilise them much better. At the school stage, the working hours per day should vary from about four hours at the pre-primary stage to about six hours at the higher secondary stage, excluding the time for co-curricular activities. At the university stage, our effort should be to involve students in challenging programmes

of study and work for about 50 to 60 hours per week. This will include, not only 'contact' hours (about 15 to 20 per week), but a large proportion of time devoted to self-study. As one goes higher up the educational ladder, the 'contact' hours should become less and the time for self-study should be lengthened correspondingly.

My second concrete proposal is that greater emphasis should be placed, in the years ahead, on those programmes of educational development which depend essentially on human effort. These will include the following:

- 1) *Revision of Curricula and Courses:* A major objective of this programme should be to orientate education to national needs. This would include programmes such as promoting national consciousness, emphasising character formation through the cultivation of moral, social and spiritual values, improving science education, introducing work-experience and national or social service, stressing physical education, games and sports and developing a rich and varied plan of co-curricular activities.

At the school stage, there is an urgent need to upgrade and improve curricula, to increase their knowledge content and to provide adequately for the development of skills and the inculcation of right interests attitudes, and values. It is also necessary to introduce courses at two levels- ordinary and advanced. At the university stage, the combination of subjects permissible for the first degree should be more elastic than at present and should not be linked rigidly with the subjects studied at school. There should be provision for general (pass and honours) and special courses. At the postgraduate stage, courses should be designed with three objectives; preparing teachers for schools; catering for the needs of students who are still interested in broad connected areas, and providing a high degree of specialisation.

- 2) *Adoption of Improved Methods of Teaching and Evaluation:* This programme should be promoted through teachers, production of literature and establishment of subject-teachers' associations. A programme of high priority would be to improve the teaching of languages. It is also

necessary, as recommended by the Education Commission, to establish a Bureau of Evaluation in each State to implement an intensive programme of examination reform in close collaboration with the National Council of Educational Research and Training. This programme should include, amongst others, the reform of external examinations, reduction in their number, early declaration of results, introduction of a system of internal assessment in all institutions and making it an integral part of the promotion procedures from class to class, and the maintenance of appropriate progress cards for all students.

3) *Book-Development Programmes*: These will include the following:

- a) The production of textbooks in English and modern Indian languages which contain Indian experience and material, written by Indian authors, and specially oriented to Indian conditions and the needs of the Indian students;
- b) Rationalisation and expansion of the book production schemes which are now being implemented in collaboration with friendly countries like the US, the UK and the USSR;
- c) Further development of the programmes of textbook production for the school stage under the National Council of Educational Research and Training;
- d) Development of textbook production programmes for the school stage under the State Governments, through the establishment of autonomous organisations and the development of research in curriculum and textbook production; and
- e) Preparation and publication of children's books of all categories, especially with a view to promoting national integration. These books should be produced simultaneously in all the modern Indian languages and should be priced the same in every language. Through them a good deal of common reading material will be available to every Indian child. This will promote national integration and help to raise and equalise standards in all parts of the country.

It is easy to see that all these and similar other programmes need human effort rather than any large-scale investment of resources in physical or financial terms. An increasing emphasis will therefore have to be placed on them in planning educational development in poor countries.

## VIII

Planning for educational development in poor country is a very difficult and challenging task. It is true that all educational development needs additional investment and that the total educational expenditure in India will have to be increased, as the Education Commission has pointed out, from Rs. 12 per head of population or 3 per cent of the national income in 1965-66 to Rs. 54 per head of population or 6 per cent of the national income in 1985-86. But the new educational system that we need cannot be created by money alone and the secret of success in this endeavour will lie in developing a proper technology of planning which will emphasize cost-consciousness, intensive utilisation of existing facilities, evolution of low cost techniques, selective approach, and creation of a climate of dedication and sustained hard work. If this can be done, we will have a much better return even for the existing level of investment in education: but if it cannot be done, a great part of the additional investment we might make in education will go to waste as it does at present. One cannot therefore over-emphasise the importance of changing our present methods of planning which are suited largely to rich nations and to adopt instead a new strategy of educational development which will be in keeping with the conditions of a poor country. As Dr Triguna Sen has observed:

"My main plea at this critical juncture is that we should change our strategy of educational development to suit the present situation. In the past, we have pumped money into the educational system fairly liberally – educational expenditure has increased, in the last fifteen years, at 11.7 per cent per annum (at current prices) which is even more than twice the growth in national income. But we have not emphasized human effort adequately, with sad results that are familiar to all of us. For the next few years, we shall have to reverse this. We shall need more money no doubt; and I shall have to appeal to the Finance Minister

to have a specially soft corner for education. My appeal to the philanthropic public would be stronger still and I will plead with it to give generously to education and to make up, in part at least, the shortfalls of the public sector. But I will make my most earnest plea to students and teachers to emphasize human endeavour, to make the most intensive use of all available facilities, to reduce all wastages to the minimum to bring about a major change in their attitudes to make the educational system elastic and dynamic, to create a climate of hard and sustained work and in this way demonstrate that much greater progress is possible even with a comparatively smaller investment of funds.'

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### Ancillary Services (1964)

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If the education given in an elementary school is to be fully effective, it is not enough to provide teachers, buildings and equipment and school supervisors and to design curricula and teaching methods. These programmes will have to be supplemented by certain ancillary services whose primary objective is to help the children to benefit better from the instruction provided in the schools. They include (1) medical inspection and treatment or health services, (2) provision of school meals, (3) free supply of textbooks and writing materials, and (4) provision of school uniforms. The growth of these services in India, their present position and the broad lines of their development in the near future would be briefly discussed in this chapter.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

A proper attention to the health and physical well-being of the pupil is as important as the development of his intellectual powers. The two, in fact, are interdependent, and intellectual development is hardly possible if the health and physical development of the child are neglected. This is particularly so in the age-group 6-14 when children are exposed to several dangers to their health and are undergoing developmental changes which call for watchful care. It is also in this stage that the foundations of future health and well-being are laid. While, therefore, the provision of adequate health services is important at all stages of education, it assumes very great significance at the elementary stage.

The provision of health services in the elementary schools of India is still in its infancy. Attention to its need was first drawn

only in the beginning of the present century and Baroda was the first to introduce a scheme of school medical inspection in 1909. In the next 15 years, almost every province of British India made some effort to provide school health service. The usual pattern adopted was to appoint a few doctors, with the necessary assisting staff, to carry out medical inspection of the school children in selected areas. Some arrangements for treatment were made in most cases; but by and large, these were not satisfactory. There was hardly any provision for preventive work and follow-up service. Unfortunately, even these modest attempts were not pursued further and when the need for economy arose, they were the first to fall to retrenchment. In large urban corporations like Bombay or Madras, however, resources in medical personnel, hospital and dispensary facilities and funds were available. In these areas, therefore, a fairly adequate health service for the children of elementary schools was developed as a part of the general health service which these corporations provided to their community. Barring these few exceptions, school health services may be said to have made little or no progress in the country prior to 1947.

Greater attention has been paid to the provision of school health services in the post-independence period and a few states have set up school health services but they are largely confined to urban areas.

Most of them, as in the attempts made in the earlier period, look after medical inspection only and facilities for treatment are not generally adequate.

In the rural areas, the provision of school health services has been made a responsibility of the primary health centres which are now being established in the community development blocks. Hedged in as they are with difficulties in getting trained personnel in adequate number, the primary health centres generally are able to handle only medical inspection of children at the headquarters of the centres and adequate follow-up work has yet to develop on a large scale. It may, therefore, be said that, even today, excepting in the big cities, provision for health services on an adequate scale has yet to be made for children attending elementary schools, particularly in the rural areas.

The problem was examined in detail by the School Health Committee appointed by the Government of India sometime ago

under the chairmanship of Smt. Renuka Ray, M.P. The Report of the Committee is a valuable document which suggest a practicable programme for the development of school health services. While agreeing that all children should ultimately be examined medically and treated to the extent necessary, the Committee recommended that, in view of the shortage of medical personnel and financial resources, attention should be concentrated on the age-group 6-11 which is a very vulnerable and important stage in the life of the child.

In the urban areas, the provision of health services is comparatively easy. The general health services to the community, which provide the basic structure on which alone school health services can be planned, are better developed; and medical personnel are more easily available. In the rural areas, however, the situation is very different. Here the basic difficulty is the lack of adequate provision of health services to the community itself.

The establishment of a primary health centre in each Community Development Block is an attempt to rectify this general deficiency. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the provision of health services in rural elementary schools should be built around the primary health centre. It suggested that the staff of each primary health centre should be immediately strengthened by the addition of an auxiliary nurse-midwife and that its contingent grant should be increased in order to enable the doctor in-charge to provide health services (including medical inspection and treatment) to about 2,000 children in the primary schools in close proximity to the centre.

The Committee estimated that this modest scheme would provide health services to about 44 per cent of the children of school going age in rural areas and that its cost during the Third Five-Year Plan period would come to about Rs. 40 million. The Committee further recommended that the scheme should be expanded in the Fourth Plan period by the addition of one medical officer and three auxiliary nurse-midwives to the staff of each primary health centre. This would make it possible for the Centre to provide health services to all children in the age-group 6-11 in the C.D. Block concerned.

The cost of this phase was estimated at Rs. 140 million for the Fourth Plan period. According to the recommendations made by

the Committee, therefore, the provision of health services to all children in the age-group 6-11 should be the first priority in the programme and should be implemented in two stages. In the first stage, the urban areas and villages in the immediate neighbourhood of the primary health centres would be covered; and in the second stage, all children in the age-group 6-11, both in urban and rural areas, would be brought under the scheme.

The programme suggested by the Committee is obviously modest and eminently practicable and realistic. It is to be hoped that it will be possible to put across this programme during the next seven years.

### SCHOOL MEALS

Even more important than medical inspection and treatment is the need to provide school meals. Malnutrition is the prime factor in the erosion of health. The diet surveys carried out in the country by the Indian Council of Medical Research since 1935 have shown that the average diet of an Indian is unbalanced, partly because of its lack of adequate quantities of proteins, vitamins, fats and minerals. About two-thirds of the families do not consume any fruits or nuts; about one-third of the families do not consume sugar, jaggery or meat, fish or fresh fruits; and about one-fourth of them do not consume milk and milk products or leafy vegetables. In about four-fifths of the families surveyed, the intake of protective foods was either nil or below standard. It is thus evident that under-nutrition and malnutrition exist widely in our country and that young children are, therefore, particularly liable to diseases arising from them.

The medical inspections of school children which have been carried out in several parts of the country have shown that sickness and mortality rates of children in India are among the highest in the world and that the proportion of children suffering from malnutrition and other preventable causes are distressingly high. The Indian Council of Medical Research and the World Health Organisation recently surveyed several states in South India and found that 2 per cent of the children belonging to the poorer socio-economic groups suffered from 'frank' signs of deficiency. It is assumed that for every case of 'frank' signs there are probably 10 children on the border line of malnutrition, the

magnitude of the problem becomes colossal. In Baroda, a survey of 32,500 children carried out in 1959-60 showed that over 26,000 had some kind of defect or the other. A survey carried out in Calcutta in 1954 showed that 75 per cent of the children had some defect; and nutritional disorders constituted the biggest deficiency (40 per cent). Surveys carried out in various schools in 16 districts of Uttar Pradesh in 1949-51 showed that, out of 6,400 boys examined, more than 3,700 had one or more defects. In a Delhi survey of 8,400 children, the percentage of defective children was as high as 84. The results of other surveys are also similar and it may, therefore, be concluded that the existence of disease is very high amongst Indian children and that one of the most important contributory causes is under-nutrition or malnutrition.

In conditions of this type, the significance of a school meal programme is obvious. It will assist in improving the health and physical development of the child. It will also play an important role in education because children who are better fed and healthier will make quicker and sounder progress in their studies. India will, therefore, have to develop a universal programme of school meals as an integral part of its programme of universal, free and compulsory primary education.

Prior to 1947, a programme of school meals was not in operation outside the big corporation towns. The Madras Corporation was the first in the field and inaugurated a modest school meal programme in 1925. The scheme, however, made rapid progress. The Corporation of Bombay was the next to follow and it introduced a scheme for providing snacks to under-nourished children. The Corporation of Ahmedabad and of some other big cities also introduced experimental schemes on a small scale. But, by and large, it may be said that this programme hardly received any attention in the pre-independence period.

Even after independence, the school meal programme was not taken up on any adequate scale until 1956 when the Madras scheme of free school meals to poor children in elementary schools was launched. The main objectives of this scheme were two: (1) to enroll poor children who remained outside the school on account of poverty, and (2) to give at least one satisfactory meal to poor children in school. Initially the movement was purely voluntary and was started by contributions from the people. A

school desiring to provide school meals constituted a committee of donors who collected the funds, selected the poor children who were to receive meals and also organised and supervised the preparation and serving of food. Under the dynamic leadership of the State Education Department, the scheme made very rapid progress. In 1957, the State Government stepped in with a view to stabilising and expanding the scheme to all the schools in the State. Under a programme approved by the Government, the cost of a school meal was estimated at 10 naya paise. The local donors were expected to contribute 4 naya paise. Out of this, and 6 naya paise were given by Government as a grant-in-aid. With this assistance from the State, the scheme developed still further and now about 1-3 million children or about one-third of the total number of children enrolled in elementary schools, are provided with a school meal every day. Recently CARE has been assisting with gifts of milk powder, corn meal and vegetable oil. By the end of the Third Plan, it is expected that the number of children served by the school meal programme would rise to about 1.7 millions.

It was this dynamic programme in Madras that really attracted national attention to the utility and significance of school meals. Other State Governments, therefore, took up the programme one after another. Kerala has organised a school meal programme with the assistance of CARE, which has now almost 100 per cent coverage at the elementary stage and provides school meals to about 1.8 million children every day. Andhra Pradesh provides school meals to about one million children and Mysore has recently started a programme for feeding 500,000 children. School milk is provided in Rajasthan (1 million children) and Punjab (500,000 children, proposed to be increased to 1 million very shortly). All these programmes are assisted by CARE.

In addition, UNICEF provides milk powder for school feeding programmes and under this scheme, a large-scale school feeding programme has been developed in Orissa. Smaller programmes are also in operation in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Besides, the Church organisations—Church World Service and Catholic Relief Services—also provide assistance for school feeding programmes to individual schools and between them, they cover about one million children. In order to assist the development for the programme still further, the Government of India has approved, since 1962-63, a centrally sponsored scheme

of grant-in-aid to state governments. Under this scheme, assistance is offered to state governments to the extent of one-third of the total expenditure incurred by them on school feeding programmes (excluding the value of the commodities received free through CARE, UNICEF or similar organisations and local contributions) outside the State Plan ceilings. It is expected that by the end of the Third Plan, about 10 to 12 million children would be covered by the school meals programme. This implies that in the country as a whole one school going child out of every five will receive school meals. This is fairly satisfactory. But the main difficulty is that the programme has developed very unequally in the different parts of the country. What is needed is to make a fairly large-scale beginning in states which have not introduced it so far or are operating it on a very small scale, viz., Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

A reference may also be made to other useful programmes or ideas that are being developed in this sector. The Indian Council of Medical Research, after many years of study, has standardised the dietary requirements of children from birth to 21 years. These will be of great use in providing supplementary school meals to children as a part of the school feeding programme. It has also been found, by a comparative study of the prevailing diet with the standard requirements, that the major types of malnutrition encountered among children are attributable to deficiencies of proteins, vitamins A and B complex and calcium. Besides, there is evidence of gross caloric under-nutrition. It has also been found that the nutritional deficiencies vary from region to region. Considerable research work has, therefore, been done by the Nutrition Research Laboratories of the Indian Council of Medical Research on the preparation of menus for school meals suited to different regions of the country. These menus take into consideration the common dietary deficiencies in that region and also the locally available food materials and are so designed that a nutritional meal according to standard requirements could be provided at low cost which varies, at the present day prices, from 8 naya paise to 12 naya paise per meal per day. As many as 52 such menus have been designed so far and the work is in progress.

The Central Food Technological Research Institute at Mysore has prepared a multipurpose food of a very good quality

consisting of defeated groundnut flour. One ounce of multipurpose food yields about 12 grammes of proteins and a substantial amount of calcium, vitamin A and riboflavin. Its cost is about 64 naya paise at present and is expected to be reduced, with improvements in the process of manufacture, by about 25 per cent. It is, therefore, estimated that multipurpose food would not cost more than 2 naya paise per meal per day and serve as a nutritional strengthening of the school meal. The main difficulty in expanding this programme, however, is the limited production available at present and the lack of popularity of this new article of diet.

Another interesting programme is the expanded nutrition programme initiated in Orissa by the community development organisation with the assistance of UNICEF. The main object of this project is to increase village, school and home production of nutritional foods such as poultry, eggs, fish, fruits and vegetables, and to distribute the supplies produced through schools, mothers' clubs and community development and extension personnel, to expectant and nursing mothers and young children in homes and in schools. The scheme has now been taken up in a few Blocks, and is gradually being extended. The idea has been caught up by other states as well. If suitably developed, it will not only provide school meals to children but also make us self-sufficient in this matter.

Wherever school meal programmes have been introduced, the enrolment of children has increased and their daily attendance at school sessions has shown remarkable improvement. The health of the children has shown distinct improvement and so has their progress in studies. The popular opinion in favour of an early expansion of the programme is, therefore, growing very rapidly. The main difficulty which prevents expansion, however, is the paucity of resources. Even in the Madras pattern, which is the least expensive, the cost of a school meal works out at 12 naya paise per day or Rs. 20 per child per year. The total enrolment in the age-group 6-11 alone will be 50 million at the end of the Third Plan and, about 70 million by the end of the Fourth Plan. The recurring expenditure on a school meal programme for this age-group only would, therefore, be about Rs. 1,000 million a year at the end of the Third Five-Year Plan and Rs. 1,400 million per year at the end of the Fourth Plan. How resources of this order are to

be found and in what form for a programme of such high priority is one of the important and difficult problems for the planner.

#### TEXTBOOKS AND WRITING MATERIALS

The third significant ancillary service to be provided under the programme of universal education is to supply, free of charge, textbooks and writing materials to all children. Under the compulsory education law, the parent can only be compelled to send his children to school and he cannot be compelled to purchase the textbooks and writing materials required by them. It is, therefore, necessary to devise a scheme for free supply of textbooks and writing material in all programmes of compulsory education.

In developing countries the usual experience is that the progress of the children from poorer families suffers considerably because they do not have an adequate and timely supply of textbooks and writing materials. Studies carried out in the rural areas of this country show that, at the elementary stage, only about 30 per cent of the children have a complete set of all the textbooks prescribed and also the necessary writing materials. About 40 per cent of the children have some textbooks and some supply of writing materials, although this is inadequate and some of the books are purchased, not at the beginning of the school year, but rather late in the session. About 30 per cent of the children have such an inadequate supply of textbooks and writing materials that their progress is adversely affected. Some of these children do not own a single book; and several others do not get them in time at the beginning of the school year. It is obvious, therefore, that the standards in elementary schools would improve materially if a complete set of textbooks and adequate writing materials are made available to every pupil at the beginning of the school year.

It may also be pointed out that the poverty of the parent is not the only reason for the proposal to provide free textbooks and writing materials to all children in elementary schools. In England, for instance, the general standard of living is such that it may not be necessary to supply free textbooks and writing materials to any child. But the local authorities have adopted a system of supplying free textbooks and writing materials in *all* their elementary schools on the ground that such a provision



improves the standard of education. The programme is, therefore, essential on educational grounds; and the case for it gets doubly strengthened in developing countries where the poverty of the average parent makes it difficult for children to get the necessary textbooks and writing materials in time.

This programme is not entirely new. The need to provide free textbooks and writing materials to poor children has long been recognised and, in every state, some financial provision is always made for the free supply of textbooks to poor and needy children. With the increase in expansion and the introduction of compulsory education, the scale of this programme has to be considerably increased. The exact proportion of children to whom free textbooks and writing materials would have to be provided on economic grounds will vary from area to area. But, by and large, it is felt that about 30 per cent of the children will have to be given this facility in the country as a whole. There are some who suggest a target of 50 per cent in this respect on the ground that textbooks and writing materials should be given free to all children of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and also to all girls, as a form of encouragement. It would, therefore, not be wrong to assume that, on economic and social grounds alone, we may have to provide free textbooks and writing materials to at least 30-50 per cent of the children in elementary schools. This is the minimum inescapable programme and, if possible, it would be desirable to go a step further and to provide free textbooks and writing materials to *all* children.

Two important issues arise in this context. The first refers to the cost of the programme. It has been estimated that the cost of textbooks and writing materials varies, on an average, from Rs. 3 per child per year in class I to Rs. 30 per child per year in class VIII. There are also variations from state to state; but as a rough estimate, it may be said that the total cost of the programme of supplying textbooks and writing materials to all children in elementary schools in the country as a whole would be very large, about Rs. 360 million a year, at the end of the Third Five-Year Plan. This works out at an average of about Rs. 6 per child per year for an enrolment of 60 million children. The second point refers to the difficulties of obtaining the necessary supplies of paper. Even at present, when a fairly large proportion of children do not have adequate supplies of textbooks and writing materials, it is very

difficult to get the necessary paper required for textbooks and writing materials. The overall production of paper in the country is inadequate to meet the total demand and this deficiency seems to become more acute every year.

In order to meet both these difficulties, a number of useful programmes have been suggested. The first is that the state governments should take over the production of textbooks at the elementary school stage. This is absolutely essential in view of the fact that, under a scheme of universal compulsory education, the state itself becomes the largest buyer of textbooks for elementary schools. The main argument urged against this policy is that the quality of textbooks would deteriorate if the free competition that now operates in the field is eliminated by the creation of a state monopoly. This danger can be avoided by creating a suitable machinery for the purpose in each state and by making the necessary guidance and assistance available at the national level through organisations like the National Council of Educational Research and Training. The academic aspects of this programme have already been discussed in Chapter 15 and need not be repeated here. From the financial point of view, with which alone we are concerned here, it may be said that state production of textbooks would reduce their prices to the lowest level possible and would result in a corresponding diminution in the total cost of the programme of supplying free textbooks to all children.

The second important suggestion put forward is that attempts should be made to prolong the average life of a textbook. From the studies which have been conducted in this field, it appears that the average life of a textbook in India is between one and two years only at the primary stage. Children who have been newly enrolled in schools generally require two to three copies of their first primer and reader before they pass class I, so that the average life of a textbook in this class may be said to be three to six months only. As against this, the average life of a school book in England is eight years, so that even if the English book costs a little more at the beginning, it is ultimately far more economical than the cheap but poorly produced school books of our country. From the point of view of paper supply too, the longer the life of a textbook, the less is the demand for additional paper. In view of all these considerations, it is clear that our first concern should be to prolong the life of school books as much as possible.



Studies have shown that the following factors affect the life of school textbook:

- a) The paper, binding and production of the book;
- b) The attractiveness of the book: children generally tend to preserve carefully a beautiful book while they tend to destroy a bad one;
- c) The home atmosphere of children: in cultured homes with traditions of reading and proper care of books, children also grow up to love and respect books and to treat them properly, while under contrary conditions, they generally tend to treat books with scant respect and to destroy them;
- d) The attitude of the teacher and the emphasis that is laid by him in teaching children on how to take care of books;
- e) The total number of books available in the school: the larger the total number of books available, the greater is the life of each individual book; and
- f) Whether the books are kept in the school or given to children to be taken home: books kept in the school in the custody of teachers, and made available to children during school hours only, last longer. Books entrusted to children and taken home by them are generally destroyed more quickly because children are found to be most careless with books at home and on the way to school and back.

Our first concern should, therefore, be to find out what the average life of a school book is, to ascertain the factors which affect the life of a school book, and to take steps, through proper education of teachers and through other suitable methods to prolong this life as much as possible. It would be the greatest measure of economy in funds and paper and it will also improve the efficiency of schooling.

Three important programmes can be suggested to prolong the average life of a textbook. The first is to improve production, to use good paper and binding and to increase the attractiveness of the book. The second is to train the elementary teachers to emphasise the need to educate children to take proper care of books and to look upon a child's care of his books as an integral part of the school discipline. Our minimum target in this respect should be that each textbook should last at least four years and

should be used successively by four different groups of children. The third and probably the most important suggestion put forward is that textbooks should be kept in the school itself in the custody of the teacher and should be made available to children during school hours only. Even if this experiment is tried only in classes I and II, the resulting economy in cost and paper would be considerable. For instance, a child requires, on an average, two or three copies of its primer and reader before he passes class I. If these books are kept in school it is found that the average wastage per year is only about 6 to 10 copies in a class of 40 to 50 children. In these lower classes, there is no home work also and no academic problems need arise if books are made available to children during school hours only. This suggestion has great potentialities and deserves a fair trial.

#### SCHOOL UNIFORMS

The provision of school uniforms is another programme awaiting to be developed in an imaginative way. The school should be a community in itself. It is very difficult to create a common community atmosphere in a situation where children's clothes, their books and writing materials act as reminders of social differences. If it were possible to provide school meals to all children so that all of them share the same common food once a day, to provide them with free textbooks and writing materials on a basis of equality, and also to provide them with a common uniform, the school will immediately become a cooperative commonwealth of students in which all considerations of caste, religion, economic status, etc., would be eliminated and the children would be trained to be citizens of a welfare state based on equality, fraternity and justice. Side by side with the ancillary services to provide school meals and free textbooks and writing materials, therefore, it is also necessary to provide common school uniforms.

It is not necessary to provide school uniforms at state cost to all children. The first step in the programme would be to prescribe a school uniform which could be prepared at the minimum cost possible. Parents should then be persuaded to buy this uniform for their children, whenever they buy new clothes for them. If the programme is explained to the parents by the teachers, it may be possible to provide school uniforms to about 75 to 80 per cent of

the children entirely through family purchases and it may be necessary to provide financial assistance only to 20 to 25 per cent of the children for purchasing school uniforms. Funds for this will have to be provided by community effort or from the state exchequer.

In this field also, Madras has given a very encouraging lead. A movement for providing uniforms to school children has already been started in this state. A very simple uniform has been prescribed and this is being introduced rapidly in school after school. Most of the children purchase the uniform for themselves; but where they cannot do so, local school committees collect funds and give free uniforms to the poor and needy children. So far about 1.3 million children have been provided with free school uniforms and the movement is growing every day. It is entirely a voluntary movement and receives no assistance from the state.

In the Nanavatty school at Bombay, an interesting practice has been introduced. Every pupil joins in spinning for half an hour a day and this enables him to spin enough yarn to provide himself with khadi uniforms. This is another programme which may be developed with advantage.

These experiments point the way in which large scale community and school effort can be mobilised to make the elementary school an institution of the community and give the children what is their right to receive.

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## Political Content of Education (1964)\*

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I am very grateful to the Academy of Political and Social Studies and particularly to its Chairman, Shri R.K. Khadilkar, for inviting me to deliver the keynote address to this opportune Seminar on the important but neglected subject of the political content of education. This is an honour which I hardly deserve but of which I shall ever feel proud. I have, therefore, accepted the invitation in all humility, not because I felt that I could make any worthwhile contribution to the subject, but because I was sure to gain a good deal through your deliberations. I am also happy to find that my task as an opening speaker is comparatively easy. I have only to raise a few relevant questions about the theme of the Seminar and then lean back to absorb the solutions as they gradually emerge in the course of the stimulating debate we are all anticipating.

The major theme of this Seminar is to discuss what the political content of the curricula at the different stages of the education system should be if appropriate political education is to be provided to the people on an adequate scale. But this problem can be discussed only against the background of related wider issues such as the role of education in bringing about the needed social transformation in the country, the kind of political education we should have to achieve our social and economic objectives, the role of the education system in providing this education, the nature and extent of the political education which our educational system has provided in the past or is providing at present, the factors which hinder the development of appropriate political education on an adequate scale, and the measures that have to be taken to improve the present admittedly

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\**Political Content of Education* (Edited by A.R. Kamat), 1964

unsatisfactory situation. I propose to discuss briefly a few of these important problems.

#### EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

The political system always dominates the entire social scene; and hence those who wield political power are generally able to control all the different social subsystems and manipulate them to their own advantage. The social groups in power, therefore, have always manipulated the education systems, especially when these happen to depend upon the State for their very existence, to strengthen and perpetuate their own privileged position. But herein lies a contradiction. For the very realisation of their selfish ends, the social groups in power are compelled to extend the benefits of these educational systems to the underprivileged groups also.

The inevitable task is generally performed with three precautions abundantly taken care of: (1) the privileged groups continue to be the principal beneficiaries of the educational system, dominate the higher stages of education or the hard core of prestigious and quality institutions or the most useful of courses, so as to safeguard their dominant position of leadership in all walks of life; (2) the system is so operated that underprivileged groups can utilise it only marginally in real terms and the bulk of them become either dropouts or push-outs and get reconciled to their own inferior status in society; and (3) the few from the weaker sections that survive and succeed in spite of all the handicaps are generally co-opted within the system to prevent dissatisfaction. But education is essentially a liberating force so that, as time passes, some underprivileged groups do manage to become aware of the reality, the number of the educated persons soon become too large to be fully co-opted, and many able individuals among them strive to organise and liberate the weak and the underprivileged. The resultant awareness of the people, combined with suitable organisation, necessarily leads to adjustments in the social structure and to an increase in vertical mobility so that new groups begin to share power. Eventually, other social changes also follow and the traditional, inequalitarian, and hierarchical social structure leads to be replaced by another which is more modern, less hierarchical, and more egalitarian. The

educational system, therefore, is never politically neutral, and it always performs three functions simultaneously, viz., it helps the privileged to *dominate*, *domesticates* the underprivileged to their own status in society, and also tends to *liberate* the oppressed. Which of these functions shall dominate and to what extent, depends mostly on one crucial factor, viz., the quality and quantity of the political education which the system provides or upon its 'political content'.

The developments in Indian society, polity, and education during the past 175 years should be viewed against the background of this broad philosophy. From very ancient times, the Indian society has always been elitist and power, wealth, and education were mostly confined to the three *dvija* castes of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas. The vast bulk of the people consisted of the Shudras (who were poor, weak, and mostly illiterate) and of the Antyajas and the tribes (who lived on the social fringe and whose lot was even worse). What is important to note is that the system has an infinite capacity to adjust or to absorb and, for that very reason, it is extremely resistant to any radical transformation. In spite of all the vicissitudes of 2,500 years of history, therefore, the social system continued to exist almost unchanged till the opening of the nineteenth century when the British administrators began to lay the foundation of the modern system of education.

The main objective of the British was to educate a class of persons who would act as the interpreters between them and the ruled. Consequently, the education system they created was essentially meant for the ruling classes who utilised it to modernise themselves and to strengthen and perpetuate their own position. It hardly reached the masses. Even in 1947, only one child out of three in the age-group 6-11 and only one out of every eleven in the age-group 11-14 went to school and the percentage of literacy was only about 14. But to the extent education did reach the masses, it mainly domesticated them to accept the existing social order. It no doubt had a liberating role as well, especially when it tried to introduce Indians to Western literature, science and technology or to spread Western concepts of individualism, democracy, and liberalism or to spread education among the poor people, scheduled castes, and tribes or girls or to increase vertical

mobility. But these liberalising forces were the least developed and indirect. Essentially, it was a system that helped domination and domestication rather than liberation.

What was the political education that this system provided? It tried mainly to preach the superiority of England over India in almost every field and to inculcate a loyalty to the Crown. When, in spite of these attempts, some sentiments of nationalism began to grow among the students and teachers, it designated them as 'indiscipline' and tried to suppress them. In the social field, the main policy of government was that of neutrality. It was because of this weak political content or the failure to conscientise the people that the education system helped to preserve the status quo rather than to promote rapid egalitarian change. This is the main reason why Mahatma Gandhi advised students to leave schools and colleges if they wanted to serve the country and established independent institutions outside the formal educational system to give national education and to train freedom fighters.

It must be pointed out, however, that in spite of this failure of the educational system, the Indian people did manage to get a political education which, in the long run, helped them to win freedom. This happened outside the school system, in the freedom struggle which Gandhiji organised. Here the people participated in millions and got political education through personal involvement, a case of 'learning by doing'. Gandhiji was, therefore, the best exponent of non-formal education the country has ever had and India after Gandhiji was vastly different from the India before him. It was the 'political literacy' he spread among even the people that enabled us to become a sovereign democratic republic.

What has happened in the post-independence period? Under the British rule, the Congress leaders argued that political education was an important part of education and refused to accept the official view that education and politics should not be mixed with one another. But when they came to power in 1947, they almost adopted the British policy and began to talk of education being defiled by politics. 'Hands off education' was the call to political parties. But in spite of it, political infiltration into the educational system has greatly increased in the sense that different political parties vie with each other to capture the minds

of teachers and students. As has been wittily observed, the politicians not only fished in the troubled waters of education, but actually troubled the educational scene in order that they may be able to fish. The wise academicians wanted political support without political interference. What we have actually received is infinite political interference with little or no genuine political support. It is also obvious that this interference with the educational system by political parties for their own ulterior motives is no political education at all: and with the all-round growth of elitism, it is hardly a matter for surprise that real political education within the school system (which really means the creation of a commitment to social transformation) has been made even weaker than in the pre-independence period.

At the same time, the freedom struggle came to an end and the major non-formal agency of political education disappeared. The press could and did provide some political education. But it also committed several errors and did not utilise the opportunity to the full, especially as the Indian language papers did not grow adequately and the stranglehold of vested interests continued to dominate. Now even the capacity of the press to provide appropriate political education has been reduced considerably. The same can be said of political parties as well as of other institutions and agencies outside the school system which can be expected to provide political education. All things considered, it appears that we have made no progress in genuine political education in the post-independence period and have even slid back in some respects. For instance, the education system has become even more elite-oriented. The masses get precious little out of it — about 60 per cent of the people are still illiterate. Patriotism has become the first casualty. Gandhiji gave us the courage to oppose government when it was wrong, in a disciplined fashion and on basic principles (he believed the means to be as important as the ends) and taught us to work among the poor people for mobilising and organising them. Today, we have lost genuine touch with the people in our overemphasis on electioneering, mass mobilisation has disappeared, and we have even lost the courage to fight on basic issues in a disciplined manner because gestational and anarchic politics for individual, group, or party aggrandisement has become common. The education system of today, therefore, continues to support, as in

the pre-independence days, domination of the privileged groups and domestication or co-opting of the underprivileged ones and does not support liberating forces to the required extent. This situation will not change unless we take vigorous steps to provide genuine political education on an adequate scale. This is one of the major educational reforms we need; and if it is not carried out, mere linear expansion of the existing system of formal education will only support the status quo and hamper radical social transformation.

### POLITICAL EDUCATION

This leads me to the second problem; viz., what is genuine political education and what are its objectives, content, methods, and agencies? I shall deal with these problems seriatim.

- 1) *Definition*: What is political education? Since the socio-economic objectives of a country are to be realised through the informed, responsible, and sustained political action of all citizens, political education may be defined as the preparation of a citizen to take well-informed, responsible, and sustained action for participation in the national struggle for the realisation of the socioeconomic objectives of the country. As I said earlier, the overriding socioeconomic objectives in India are the abolition of poverty (in the sense that a minimum essential standard of living is assured to every individual) and the creation of a modern, democratic, secular, and socialist society in place of the present traditional, feudal, hierarchical, and inequalitarian one.
- 2) *Objectives and Content*: All education is essentially a threefold process of
  - imparting essential information;
  - building up needed skills to react to or solve problems that arise in day-to-day situations in real life by using the knowledge acquired; and
  - cultivating the needed interests, attitudes, and values.

This applies to political education as well; and the content of political education will, therefore, consist of *knowledge, skills, and values* which every citizen must have in order to enable him to

become an intelligent, effective, and responsible participant in the national struggle for social transformation. It may also be pointed out that all these three elements are significant and have to be developed together, each conditioning the other. Mere knowledge does not serve the objectives of political education which requires effective participation based on appropriate skills. Similarly, unreflective or ill-informed participation is equally undesirable; and neither knowledge nor participation will lead to the realisation of the socioeconomic objectives unless they are both governed by a proper value system.

I am not in favour of using the expression 'education for citizenship' for two reasons: It is an expression that has arisen in developed nations and is not quite suited to the conditions of the developing countries; and it often means education for conformity rather than for liberation:

- a) *Knowledge*: Political education needs knowledge of the following:
  - the existing society; its historical growth; its value system social, economic, cultural, educational and political structures; division of power; and the main strengths and weaknesses of the society;
  - the new society that the nation desires to create; its value system; the processes and stages of this social transformation and the type of socio-political forces that will support it; the role of individuals and social groups or institutions in creating the new society;
  - the existing government of the country (machinery, processes, force); its strengths and weaknesses; alternative forms of government with their strengths and weaknesses; the value systems underlying different forms of government;
  - the basic problems facing the country in different walks of life;
  - the developmental plans of the country; alternative methods of development and their strengths and weaknesses.

Since knowledge of facts mentioned above is continually changing (as the facts themselves are), a programme of political

education cannot rest content with the imparting of such knowledge as a once-and-for-all affair. On the other hand, it must build up such self-study skills as will enable each individual to get all the needed information on his own and to keep himself up-to-date through his own personal efforts. This of course necessarily implies that the society does function on an 'open' basis wherein every individual has access to all the relevant facts.

b) *Skills*: The essence of political education is participation or action. A citizen must be not only politically intelligent, but also politically effective, i.e., he must be able to assist the political system to function properly, to correct aberrations therein as well as to devise strategies for influencing and achieving the desired socioeconomic changes. This will need the development of several skills among which the following may be mentioned:

- Skills of understanding and evaluation, e.g., understanding of the current political situation in different fields or at different levels, ability to understand the consequences of one's action and viewpoints as well as of the actions and viewpoints of others; development of notions of policy and the ability to evaluate policy objectives, instruments, and implementation; ability to develop and use political concepts;
- Skills of problem solving, i.e., evaluating a given political situation and deciding upon the measures needed to deal with at the individual, group, or community level;
- Skills of working in groups, of appreciating and respecting views of others, of limiting one's disapproval to argument rather than take it to abuse or blows;
- Ability to understand conflicts of all kinds that arise (e.g., conflicts between different groups, different programmes, different values, etc.) and to develop proper reactions to them; and
- Ability to express himself adequately on political matters so as to ensure effective communication which is so essential to participation.

c) *Values*: Every social and political system is based upon its own unique frame of values. Some of these are fundamental and absolute, for instance, dignity and autonomy of the individual, equality or social justice. The open democratic systems emphasize the values of freedom, tolerance, fairness, respect for truth, and emphasis on reasoning. The significance of self-awareness, self-criticism and certain scepticism towards everything, and especially all things dogmatic or fanatical, is obvious.

One important point has to be noted. Every person does not need to acquire the needed knowledge, skills, and values at the same level; and the level of attainment in this regard may vary from stage to stage of education (e.g., a student should rise to successively higher levels at primary, secondary, and university stages) and even at the same stage, it may vary from one group of students to another (e.g., a student of political science at the university stage would be at a different level from, say, a student of animal psychology or chemistry at the same stage). This presents a challenge to the educator, the sociologist, the psychologist, and the political scientist to sit together and frame appropriate curricula for each stage of education, suited to the age and maturity of students at that stage.

3) *Methods*: Education is imparted in three ways: incidental, non-formal, and formal. By 'incidental' education we mean the learning that takes place automatically as a concomitant of living itself (e.g., the first learning of language by a child in family). By 'non-formal' education we mean the organised education that takes place in the society outside the school system (e.g., education through mass media, through participation in mass movements, etc). Formal education is that which one receives by attending the formal school system.

Political education also is, therefore, imparted in all the three ways - incidental, non-formal, and formal.

a) *Incidental* : Politics is like oxygen: it is present everywhere in the social atmosphere and every citizen is breathing it or receiving a type of political education all the time through such events as the speeches and actions of political leaders, the behaviour of political

parties, the behaviour of different social groups and their reactions to particular situations, etc. Children and youth are particularly susceptible to learn from the adults they come in contact with, to imitate their skills and behaviour, and to absorb their value systems. The children and youth in a traditional, inequalitarian, feudal, and hierarchical society like ours do, therefore, absorb the value system of the society incidentally, in the very process of growing up in the society; and unless effective counteraction is taken through non-formal and formal methods to re-educate them on proper lines, the incidental methods tend to give the wrong type of political education which supports the status quo rather than social transformation. Hence the importance, in our society, of developing formal and non-formal methods of political education.

b) *Formal*: Political education has to be provided as an integral part of the formal system of education at all stages. But here we have several problems:

- At present, political education is equated with civics or education in citizenship at the school stage. This is a colourless and ineffective combination of a study of the Constitution and Five Year Plans and does not even provide the needed information content. The building up of skills and especially the cultivation of values is totally neglected. The methods of teaching are often based on rote memorisation and the element of 'doing' introduced is sometimes grotesque (e.g., election of ministers and a cabinet in primary school parliaments). The quality of the political education provided is, therefore, very poor.
- Even quantitatively, the problem is no better. At the elementary stage, we have not been able to provide universal education. Even at the secondary and university stages, the total enrolment is only about 10 per cent of the age-group 15-25, and of these, only a few study the subject which is not compulsory for all.

- There is little interest in and sustained work on the problem. We have no high level teams working on the problems anywhere. No good teaching materials are available. The teachers have no orientation. There is hardly any research and we do not even know how the system is actually faring in practice. Even in the formal system of education, therefore, we have huge tasks to be attempted.
- (c) *Non-Formal*: It must be remembered, however, that political education can make the best headway through non-formal channels. Political education is needed most by the poor and the underprivileged and they are not reached by the formal education system. Political education can be most effective among the youth in the age-group 15-25 and among adults, but these can also be reached mostly through non-formal education. These programmes do not just exist at present. However, the best method of providing political education (e.g., learning by doing) is the involvement of children, youth and adults in programmes of development and organising the underprivileged masses for improving their life. But this task has been almost totally ignored by all. It is these non-formal techniques that will have to receive priority attention.
- 4) *The Outcomes*: So far I have discussed only the inputs into political education: incidental, formal, or non-formal. But this is hardly enough. I will, therefore, say a few words about the outcome of political education or the concrete results which we should expect from it. Our first objective should be to provide a basic minimum of political education to all individuals so as to make them intelligent, effective, and responsible citizens. This may be called *political literacy* and this should be attempted at the elementary stage. By definition, it should include all such knowledge, skills, and attitudes which every individual must have. For instance, a politically literate person must know what the main issues in contemporary politics are and must know how to set about informing himself further about them. He will then know what the main political disputes are about, what beliefs the main contestants have



of them, how they affect him, and what he can or should do about them. But political literacy is not just knowledge or a theoretical analysis. Even more importantly, it is action based on right skills and values. That is why political literacy is even more difficult to attain than ordinary literacy. As can be easily imagined, the extent of political illiteracy amongst us is horrifyingly large.

The knowledge, skills, and attitudes which the leadership at various levels need are certainly much higher than political literacy. This complexity of problems to be tackled at various levels (e.g., local community, district, state, or centre) or in different walks of life such as agriculture, industry, or the services shows immense variety and, consequently, the leadership at all these levels and in all such fields will need different levels of competence in political education. Our programmes of political education must make the provision for this at the secondary and university stages, through non-formal education of out-of-school youth and adults.

Another way of looking at the same problem may be to say that political education should produce persons who will be able to function at the following three levels of political action:

- a) the purely and properly conserving level (e.g., knowing how our present system of government works and knowing the beliefs that are regarded as parts of it);
- b) the liberal or participatory level of the development of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for active citizenship; and
- c) the highest level where one strives to change the direction of government or to promote basically alternative systems at great personal risk or even at the cost of one's life. This is almost equivalent to the concept of *satyagraha* which Mahatma Gandhi put forward.

Political education has its own theoretical part which can be taught in a classroom or through other channels of formal instruction. But as it is essentially an action

programme, it will have to be learnt through the method of 'learning by doing'. Organisations like Students' Unions and Teachers' Organisations have to be promoted and worked properly within the educational system for the purpose of providing political education of the right type through participatory action. But perhaps the most important method of good political education would be to develop a nationwide programme of mass mobilisation and involvement in developmental programmes. This, as I said earlier, would be the counterpart of the struggle for political freedom which was waged in the pre-independence days.

- 5) *Agencies*: What are the agencies that will provide political education? Within education itself, the formal school system is a minor agency of political education and, as I have stressed earlier, the non-formal system which covers the out-of-school youth in the age-group 15-25 and adults is a far more powerful and effective agency. It should not be forgotten, however, that the educational system, formal or non-formal, is still only one of the agencies of political education and perhaps a minor one. There are several other social agencies which have to play their role in the programmes just as they have to play a corresponding role in programmes of other education as well. Political education must be promoted by press, the mass media like radio and television, by instruments of government at different levels such as the local bodies, the state government and the central government and the political parties (and especially the left-oriented parties).

#### A PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Friends, I have already taken too much of your time. Before concluding, however, I will refer briefly to the second theme of this Seminar, viz., preparing an outline of programme of action which the Academy of Political and Social Studies, Poona, should develop over a period of three to five years, collaborating with other agencies interested in the field. In my opinion, this programme should consist of research, publications, experimentation, training of teachers and student leaders, and organising campaigns to educate public opinion. The ultimate



objectives of the programme should be three: (1) to influence the policies of government and the official system of education so that a programme of appropriate political education is included within it on an adequate scale; (2) to develop valuable insights and understanding of the programmes and their different aspects; (3) and to train a large number of interdisciplinary personnel for dealing with problems of political education. I do hope that the Seminar will find adequate time to deal with all these four important issues.

I congratulate the Academy of Political and Social Studies, Poona, for having initiated this programme of studies relating to the relationship between education, society, and politics. It is only the basic studies into this relationship that will enable us to develop programmes of social transformation and political action.

I hope that the Academy will make every effort to elicit cooperation and collaboration of other agencies for the development of this crucial programme, and I hope that its efforts will be crowned with success.

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### The Role of the Central, State and Local Governments and Voluntary Agencies (1964)\*

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Article 45 of the Constitution lays down that the state shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children till they reach the age of 14 years. The word 'State' occurring in this Article is defined in Article 12 to include 'the Government and Parliament of India, and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India'. It is, therefore, evident that the framers of the Constitution visualised the task of universal elementary education as the joint responsibility of the Union, the states and the local bodies. Besides, it is inherent in the very nature of democracy which we have adopted, both as a way of life and as a system of government, that the parents of children and local communities should also voluntarily strive for the improvement of elementary education and be suitably associated with the administration of its programmes. Consequently, elementary education will have to be provided and developed through the governmental activities of the centre, states and local bodies and the voluntary exertion of the local communities and parents. One of the most important problems in the administration of elementary education, therefore, is the determination of the appropriate roles of all these official and non-official agencies and to coordinate them.

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\**The Indian Yearbook of Education*, National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1964

### THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Under Entry II of the list of 'state' functions appended to the Constitution, education is a state subject except to the extent provided for in the lists of 'Union' or 'concurrent' functions. In none of these is there any reference to elementary education. The strictly legal position, therefore, is that elementary education is exclusively a state subject and that the centre has no direct responsibility for it. While this is technically correct, there are several arguments to show that the government of India has an *indirect* but *significant* responsibility for elementary education. The first of these has been referred to already—the implication of Article 45 which requires 'the government and Parliament of India' also to strive for the provision of free and compulsory education. The second is the fundamental responsibility of a federal government to maintain an equitable standard of social services in all parts of the country. Universal elementary education is the most significant social service. But owing to inequalities in social, political and economic conditions, it will not be possible for all the states to provide this service at a comparable standard. Consequently, it becomes the responsibility of the centre to see that every state does provide a minimum of free education to all children on a compulsory basis. Still another reason in support of the argument is the existing allocation of financial resources between the centre and the states. The resources vested in the states under the Constitution are so meagre that, left to themselves, they will never be able to provide this costliest of social services to the public unless Central grants for the purpose are liberally made available.

What could or should the Government of India do for elementary education? Here is tentative answer:

- a) The centre can act as a clearing house and a coordinating agency in respect of elementary education (as in respect of every other sector of education).
- b) It can develop a programme of significant and fundamental research in elementary education to assist state governments in improving the quality of elementary education.

- c) It can conduct pilot projects which can be generalised by the states.
- d) It can try to level out the differences between the different states in respect of elementary education or, in other words, try to provide equality of educational opportunity to every child. For this purpose, it will have to fix the minimum targets to be reached by each state and assist the weaker states in achieving these targets.
- e) It can provide financial assistance in such a way that the weaker or less advanced states will be able to catch up with the forward states or at least reduce the large discrepancies that exist at present between them and the advanced states in respect of elementary education.

Of these five functions, the first is the least significant but an inherent function of a federal government. The second and the third will enable the centre to 'provide leadership'. The most important of all these functions are (d) and (e) whose object is to provide equality of educational opportunity as between one state or area and another.

It may be pointed out that there is no other agency which can perform this function of equalising educational opportunities. The first function can be done by the states themselves on a cooperative basis. The second and third can be done by any number of academic bodies such as teachers organisations, state institutes of education, and universities. But equalisation of educational opportunities as between one state or area and another can only be done by a higher authority in administration, i.e., the Government of India.

In this context, it may be pointed out that, when the responsibility of education rests on the family, inequalities develop at the family level and can be equalised only if a higher level, i.e., a local authority for a given area, takes over the responsibility and assists poorer families to receive education. But very soon, inequalities develop at the local level also, some local bodies taxing themselves more and yet having a lower standard of education, while others, with a smaller tax effort, can manage to have a better standard. Such a situation can be improved only if the responsibility for elementary education is taken up one step

higher, i.e., at the state level, and the state assists weaker local bodies to get ahead. But even at this stage, it is soon found that inequalities develop at the state level. These can be cured only if the responsibility for elementary education is taken up higher still, to the central government, and the latter develops a programme of assisting the weaker states to forge ahead.

This theoretical view can also be supported by a historical analysis. Between 1833 and 1870, elementary education (like every other sector) was a central responsibility. In the decentralisation introduced in 1870, elementary education became a provincial responsibility; but the centre did continue to have certain supervisory powers, and also assigned revenues for elementary education as a whole. It was only in 1921 that the Government of India became divorced from most of education, including elementary education. But the central interest in education was again revived in 1935 and has continually been increasing ever since. Even the Central grants to education in general and elementary education in particular, were received with the First Plan. It will thus be seen that central interest in elementary education was always active, except for the short period between 1921 and 1935, and that central grants for education and elementary education have always been in existence except for the short period between 1921 and 1947. To expect the centre to play an active role in elementary education and especially to equalise educational opportunities between states is, therefore, nothing new. It is merely the consummation of an activity which has been in existence for most of the time.

### THE ROLE OF THE STATE GOVERNMENTS

Under the Constitution, education is a state responsibility. Elementary education, therefore, is essentially a responsibility of the state government subject only to two reservations: the role assigned to the federal government on the one hand, and the responsibilities which the state government itself may choose to delegate to local authorities. In practice, therefore, the nature of the responsibility for elementary education assumed at the state level varies largely from state to state. At one extreme is a state like Punjab or Kerala, both of which have made little devolution of authority to local bodies and are administering elementary

education directly. At the other extreme are states like (Maharashtra, Rajasthan or Andhra Pradesh which have transferred very large powers over elementary education to local bodies) There is also a considerable variation in the nature of local bodies to which authority over elementary education is devolved: in some areas, as in Maharashtra, the authority is devolved both on municipalities in urban areas and zilla parishads in rural areas. In Rajasthan, the devolution is confined to rural areas only. Even in respect of rural areas, the devolution may be at the village level as in Assam, or at the block level as in Andhra Pradesh or at the district level as in Maharashtra. Obviously, the extent and nature of the devolution of authority depends, to some extent, upon the type of local authority to be entrusted with responsibility for elementary education.

In spite of these large variations it is possible to sum up the responsibility of the state governments for elementary education in the following broad terms:

- 1) A state government has to find all the financial resources needed for elementary education. At the state level, elementary education is the single most expensive service to be provided to the people. This responsibility is subject only to two limitations: central grants that may be received from time to time, and the contributions raised by local bodies and voluntary agencies, if any.
- 2) Legislating for elementary education is a state responsibility. The minimum legislation necessary is that required for the enforcement of compulsory attendance. If responsibility is to be transferred to local bodies, further legislation defining the extent and nature of this transfer is essential. All legislation on elementary education is thus a state function ; but the authority for subordinate legislation in matters of detail may be left to local bodies.
- 3) Supervision and inspection of elementary schools is a state function. Since the state provides the vast bulk of the funds required for elementary education and is responsible to account for it to the state legislature, it has to maintain an agency to supervise elementary schools in all cases where authority has not been transferred to local bodies. Even

where authority over elementary education has been transferred, the state sometimes retains the full right to supervise and inspect elementary schools, as in Madras. In other cases, as in Maharashtra, where large powers over supervision have been transferred to zilla parishads, the state has still to maintain a supervising machinery of its own to watch over the manner in which the zilla parishads are discharging the functions transferred to them. Where they fail to do so, the state usually arms itself with the power to take over the delegated responsibilities.

- 4) The state has large responsibilities for teachers even when local bodies are associated with the administration of elementary education. The training of elementary teachers has remained an exclusive state function and nowhere has it been transferred to local bodies. The state have also retained the right, in the interest of uniformity, to prescribe the remuneration and other service conditions of teachers. Where pension is provided to elementary teachers, the state generally takes over the responsibility to pay them as it has not been found practicable to institute separate pension funds for local bodies. The recruitment of teachers is sometimes done by the Public Services Commission and sometimes by authorities appointed by the state. Even when it is transferred to local bodies, the state retains the right to frame recruitment rules and to lay down the procedures for recruitment. In some cases, the teachers have rights of appeal to the state government in certain matters and are also eligible for promotion to certain cadres of government service.
- 5) Prescription of curricula has been an exclusive state subject and nowhere has the authority been delegated to local bodies. Textbooks also are generally prescribed by the state government. Even when the authority is delegated to a local body, it carries severe limitations and only books approved by the state can be prescribed. Under the recent trend to take over the production of elementary school textbooks directly under the state the production of text book is becoming an exclusive state function.

It may be pointed out that, when the responsibility for elementary education is transferred to local bodies, the state government has to take over to itself, in relation to the local bodies under its control, all those functions which the centre has to perform in respect of the state: it has to act as a clearing house and coordinating agency; it has to provide leadership through training of staff, supervision, research and pilot projects; and it has to equalise educational opportunities by providing special assistance to the poorer and more backward local bodies.

It will thus be seen that the state government have a supreme responsibility for elementary education and that, even when local bodies are made to share the burden, the residual responsibilities of the state are still large and of very great significance.

Perhaps the most controversial issue in the administration of elementary education is the role of local bodies. Controversies on this issue are not peculiar to India. They have been raised in several countries, both in the past and in the present.

*Wanted an evaluation:* It may also be mentioned that a number of different proposals are strongly advocated by different groups of thinkers. Some would have nothing to do with local control in the administration of elementary education while others advocate the exactly opposite view and whole prefer to delegate full powers to local bodies and to trust them implicitly. A third group of thinkers would prefer the transfer of certain powers over elementary education to local bodies and would also like to impose a number of safeguards. The proposals made by this group are generally complex depending, as they do, on a number of variables: the functions to be decentralised, the level and type of the local bodies in whose favour the decentralisation is to be made, and the availability or otherwise of local leadership in the local bodies.

In India, these problems have been continuously discussed since 1882, when the Indian Education Commission first proposed a transfer of primary education to local control, and periods of intensive controversy have generally alternated with those of comparative quietude. For instance, the discussions were very active between 1882 and 1889 when the recommendations of the Indian Education Commission were being implemented. Then

came another wave of discussion between 1918 and 1926 when the administration of elementary education was being largely transferred to local bodies under the Montague-Chemsford proposals. They became active a third time between 1930 and 1937 when the Hartog Committee opined that the delegation of authority to local bodies had been excessive and detrimental to the interests of education. Controversies have again been revived after the Report of the Balwantrai Mehta Committee (1957) which proposed the experiment of democratic decentralisation and the transfer of the administration of elementary education to panchayati raj institutions, preferably at the block level. It is idle to expect, in the light of this history, for these controversies to come to an early end or even for a uniform policy to be adopted in the whole of India. Nevertheless, it may be desirable to evaluate all the available historical evidence on the subject and to suggest a broad framework of policy within which each state government may adjust its own programme in accordance with local conditions.

It may also be pointed out that studies in comparative education do not provide an adequate basis for policy making in this important sector. Both system of administration of elementary education the centralised system functioning directly under the state governments and the decentralised system operating through the local bodies are found in different areas of the world, and strictly from the point of efficiency, both are functioning satisfactorily. USA, for example, has a highly decentralised pattern of administration for elementary education while Australia has a centralised one. The question of decentralisation of authority to local bodies is not even connected with the concept of democracy, and a democratic country like Australia may have a highly centralised pattern for the administration of elementary education, while a communist country like the USSR may decentralise its administration of elementary education very greatly to local authorities. International experience, therefore, may not guide one to a decision on the relevant issues involved and each country will have to decide for itself whether to decentralise administration of elementary education or not, in the light of local conditions. This is one reason why the problem becomes a little more difficult of solution and why, in a vast

country like India, there can be a justification for the adoption of different policies in different states.

A historical analysis of the Indian traditions in this respect will show two specific trends which have grown up over more than 100 years. In the erstwhile British Indian Provinces, ( the policy adopted was in favour of creating local bodies at various levels, both in urban and rural areas, and entrusting them with a number of governmental functions including elementary education. This trend was due partly to the influence from England where local bodies were playing an important role in the administration of all local services including elementary education, and partly to the political need of associating the people with the government and entrusting them with certain responsibilities. The development of 'local-self-government' institutions in which the principle of democracy was introduced and powers transferred to the representatives of the people, became, therefore, an important political programme in British India. In transferring governmental functions to this institutions, the general principle adopted by the British Government was to transfer 'those in which Indians had shown keen interest, those which provided ample opportunities for social service, those in which mistakes were not likely to be made, and even if made were not likely to be fraught with great consequences.' Education, under this principle, was considered an ideal subject for transfer to Indian control.

Even within education, there were several reservations and it was felt that it might not be desirable to transfer secondary or university education. But in so far as elementary education was concerned, it was regarded as the most innocuous activity which could be safely transferred to the people. The proposal was, therefore, put forward as early as 1882 by the Indian Education Commission and was implemented between 1882 and 1889.

The association of local bodies with the administration of elementary education in the erstwhile British Indian Provinces is thus about 80 years old. On the other hand, the erstwhile princely states developed an entirely different tradition. Here the background influence was not of the democratic developments in England, but of the autocratic rule of the middle ages. Moreover,

the political need of transferring governmental functions and authority to the people did not arise because the rulers themselves were Indians. No local authorities, therefore, grew up in the areas under the princely states and even when they were established in imitation of the development in the British Indian provinces, they were more like departments of the state than democratic organisations of the people. In these areas, therefore, elementary education was generally developed directly under the control of the state and in the most educationally advanced princely states, such as Travancore, Cochin or Baroda or even in the less advanced of them such as Hyderabad or Gwalior, the local bodies had nothing to do with elementary education. These erstwhile British Indian Provinces became Part A States under the Constitution in 1950 and most of the princely states became Part B States in the same year.

In Part A States, we had the tradition of local bodies administering elementary education while in Part B States, exactly the opposite tradition prevailed and elementary education was administered directly by the state. In the post-independence period, when both these parts of India became subject to the same influence, the reactions have been rather mixed.

In some of the erstwhile British Indian Provinces, as in the Punjab, a decision has been taken to transfer the administration of elementary education from the local bodies to the state: while in others, as in Maharashtra or Gujarat, the old tradition has been continued. In part B States, Kerala has maintained the old tradition of administering elementary education directly under state control while Rajasthan has gone to the other extreme and introduced full-scale decentralisation. In a state like Bihar, local bodies have been retained but their powers over the administration of elementary education have been greatly curtailed; while in a state like Madras or Mysore, a restricted form of decentralisation, with a number of important safeguards, has been adopted. The two traditions, therefore, have mingled and created a situation where the position varies from state to state. This is another reason why a stage has now been reached when a full appraisal of the programme has become essential and urgent.

### A Fundamental Issue

A number of issues have to be decided with reference to the appropriate role of the local bodies in education. The first is whether the local bodies should or should not be associated with the administration of elementary education. The main arguments in favour of the proposal are that such association stimulates local interest in elementary education and also assists in securing greater local support for its maintenance. In certain administrative functions like construction or maintenance of school buildings, purchase and upkeep of equipment, provision of mid-day meals, and supply of free books to poor and needy children, the association of local bodies or local communities has certain advantages from the point of view of quicker and more efficient service.

The advantage of an enlightened local supervision over schools in improving standards is also admitted. On the other hand, there are serious disadvantages in the proposal as revealed in the practical experience of local control in elementary education in different parts of India during the last 80 years. For instance, local bodies do not have adequate financial resources for elementary education and consequently the progress of elementary education is often hindered by its transfer to local control. The leadership now available at local levels is not sufficiently competent and experienced to deal satisfactorily with the varied and difficult problems of elementary education.

But by far the most adverse effect is felt on the body of teachers. Local influences in this regard are very strong and frequent complaints are received to the effect that the appointments of teachers are not judicious, the transfers are too frequent, the provision for remuneration and old-age is inadequate and that discipline is undermined under the pressure of local politics. As against these arguments, it is pointed out that these difficulties are due, not to local control of education as such, but to inappropriate policies of grant-in-aid and the non-availability of proper leadership at the local level.

The first of these causes can be administratively remedied. But the second is far too intractable. In deciding the question of transfer of responsibility in elementary education to local bodies,

therefore, one has to weigh carefully these advantages and disadvantages and then take a final decision, the most important factor to be taken into consideration being the availability or otherwise of proper leadership at the local level.

It is at this point that the argument generally takes a different turn. A group of thinkers agree that the proper type of leadership is not available at the local level at present. But in spite of it, it proposes the adoption of local control in elementary education on the ground that it is through such experiments that the leadership at the local level can be trained and built up. They argue that there are no short cuts to the development of democracy and that one must be prepared to trust the local bodies and to give them the right to commit mistakes, if necessary, in order that a better democratic order may arise tomorrow. This argument is not accepted by another group of thinkers who feel that elementary education should not be treated as a guinea pig.

The stage when elementary education should be transferred to local control also becomes a point in the discussion. According to one view, local bodies cannot function properly unless the people as a whole are sufficiently educated. They, therefore, suggest that elementary education should be kept under government control and developed quickly through a phased programme till illiteracy is liquidated, and that elementary education may be handed over to the local bodies only after fulfilling this task. In their opinion, the transfer of elementary education to local control, here and now, is an inopportune decision and is likely to do more harm than good. In opposition to this view, it is pointed out that the bureaucratic administration of elementary education can never enthuse the people and achieve the desired results. Besides, to argue that decentralisation of authority should follow the development of mass education is to beg the question and to put the cart before the horse. The correct position is that the development of mass education and training in democratic citizenship will have to proceed side by side and that the transfer of elementary education to local control, here and now, can expedite this process.

In this context, it may be of interest to refer to the French system, which is not as widely known in this country as it deserves to be.

Under the French system, the state government remains exclusively responsible for inspection and supervision of school and provision of teachers. It has exclusive authority to recruit teachers and to control their service conditions. It also prescribes standards for their general education and training and bears all expenditure on account of their salaries and allowances. The local bodies, called *communes* in France, are entrusted with responsibility only for the non-teacher part of the expenditure on elementary education, viz., the construction and maintenance of buildings, the provision of equipment and playgrounds, provision of textbooks, and welfare services such as school meals, school health, etc. Even for these services, they receive a grant-in-aid which is generally regulated in proportion to their wealth, the richer communes getting less and the poorer communes, more. Moreover, all communes have the same status in elementary education—from the smallest village to the metropolitan city of Paris. It may be recalled that, in the Indian conditions, the transfer of control in elementary education to local bodies affects the teachers most adversely and that it is they who are its strongest opponents. The French model entirely meets the wishes of the teachers. At the same time, it also enlists local support for elementary education and creates local interest in its problems. The State Government of Assam has passed a compulsory education law in 1962 and has created a system which is very similar to the French one. The results would be interesting to watch.

### Levels of Delegation

Another basic issue which arises in this respect is the level at which authority in elementary education is to be decentralised. Three different levels are possible: district, block (or taluk or tehsil or any other smaller unit of administration), and the village. In so far as the village level is concerned, educational opinion is generally in favour of the proposal. At this level, the decentralisation of authority could, at best, be on the French model. The most common proposal made is that the village panchayat should elect a school committee, consisting of some of its members and some non-members interested in education. The committee should have its own chairman and the headmaster of



the local school should work as its secretary. Where village panchayats do not exist, these committees may be nominated by the education department. The following should be the powers and duties of these committees:

- 1) To provide adequate accommodation and equipment for primary schools;
- 2) To carry out current repairs of school buildings and, if authorised, to also carry out special repairs and to construct new buildings;
- 3) To exercise such supervision over the school as may be prescribed;
- 4) To be responsible for the enforcement of compulsory attendance within its area;
- 5) To provide and maintain playgrounds and school gardens;
- 6) To make provision for drinking water and other necessary amenities required by school children;
- 7) To provide, wherever, possible, mid-day meals;
- 8) To provide school uniforms; and
- 9) To celebrate school functions and to organise excursions and other social and cultural programmes.

For meeting expenditure on account of these responsibilities, the school committees should receive (1) a certain proportion of the income of the local village panchayat and (2) a grant-in-aid fixed on the basis of equalisation, i.e. a larger grant being given to poorer areas and a smaller one to richer areas. The committee should supplement these receipts through voluntary contributions of the local community.

It is obvious that this programme has great potentialities but it has to be patiently worked out for some time before results can be seen.

Delegation at the district level has the sanctity of tradition and, in the programme of decentralisation which was initiated under the Montague-Chelmsford Report, delegation at the district level was the order of the day. The Balwantrai Mehta Committee, however did not accept the district as a proper unit for local

administration. There are three arguments in favour of the district unit: (1) leadership of a higher type is available at the district level; (2) the official personnel which can be provided at the district level would ordinarily be superior in quality; and (3) the administrative costs would be less if the district is taken as a unit of administration. The Balwantrai Mehta Committee felt that these advantages were more than counter-balanced by the disadvantages of the programme. The district was, for instance, too big a unit for effective decentralisation and the administration of elementary education on a district basis was still a centralised administration and it did not evoke effective participation of the public. Even granting that the leadership at the block level may not be of a high quality at present, the committee felt that, if authority was decentralised to the block level, the right type of leadership would be created very soon. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the principal unit of local administration should be, not the district, but the block which is a group of about 100 villages with a population of about 60 to 70 thousand.

There is, however, considerable opposition to decentralising the administration of elementary education at the block level. The most important arguments urged in this respect are two: (1) the leadership now available at the block level is not of the right caliber; and (2) the transfer of the administration of elementary education to the block level will make the position of teachers extremely vulnerable and throw them right into the vortex of local politics. A compromise is, therefore, often proposed under which important functions like recruitment of teachers or control of their services, planning and development, etc. are decentralised at the district level while other details of administration are transferred to the block level. The controversies on the subject are still 'hot' and the practices adopted in this respect also vary from state to state. For instance, in Maharashtra, the district has been accepted as the unit of local administration and all powers are delegated to the district level. In Rajasthan, the block is accepted as the unit of administration but powers are delegated to both the levels, the block and the district. In Andhra Pradesh, both the block and the district are accepted as units of administration and powers over primary education are transferred to the block level and those over middle school and secondary education are transferred to the district level.



### Safeguards and Reservations

Even if it is decided to decentralise authority in elementary education to some level—district, block or village—one additional problem has still to be solved: what should be the safeguards and reservations in such a programme of decentralisation? There are two schools of thought here. The first advocates trust and a complete transfer of authority, with few or no reservations and safeguards. The other view is that we cannot take too many risks with so significant a programme as that of elementary education, and if transfer of authority to local bodies becomes inevitable on political grounds, it is equally essential in the interest of education, to provide adequate safeguards and reservations.

The first safeguard is that of inspection. It is argued that the state must maintain an inspectorate of its own to supervise the working of local bodies and elementary schools. The practice in England where a *cadre* of Her Majesty's Inspectors is maintained in spite of the transfer of elementary education to local bodies is cited in support of this view. This has been the view taken in Madras where, in spite of the transfer of elementary education to panchayati raj institutions, inspection is still reserved with the state. The arguments against this proposal are two: (1) it involves a certain duplication the inspectors of the state are to be maintained in addition to those that may be provided by the local bodies themselves; and (2) such reservation of inspection creates a diarchy which leads more to friction and wastage than to any good results. The educationists, however, still support this view and point out that the small additional cost involved is probably worth it and that, given ordinary tact and tolerance on the part of the department and the local bodies, a joint system like this can be made to work well.

The most important category of safeguards relates to teachers. One proposal is that the recruitment of teachers should be made at the district level and not at the block level. It is also suggested that definite rules should be framed by the state government for recruitment of teachers to see that local influences interfere the least with judicious selections. It is also suggested that the local bodies should have very few powers over the teachers, that these should be exercised through the executive staff, and that they should be subject to an appeal to a higher authority. There should

be strict rules for transfers of teachers. Most of the solutions are complicated and their chances of success are not very good. But it is obviously not in the interest of education to give a *carte blanche* to the local bodies in dealing with teachers.

The third type of safeguards relates to certain usual administrative provisions. For instance, officers of government must have the authority to supervise the work of local bodies, to call for their records and to inspect them, and even to suspend their resolutions in emergencies. In extreme cases, the state must also have the power to suspend or dissolve a local body and to take over its functions. The member of the local bodies should also be made responsible for all their acts as public servants and be liable for prosecution for abuse or misuse of authority.

A very important argument put forward is that experiments of this type will not succeed unless three essential conditions are fulfilled. The first is to educate the non-official leaders to appreciate their responsibility properly and to adjust themselves to a system of proper relations with the executive. The second is to train the executive itself in this new form of democratic functioning and to make it realise that, in some ways, it is even better than the autocratic form of administration which it superseded. The third is the need to provide an independent machinery under the state government to act as a harmonising and conciliatory influence between the official and the non-official view points in all matters where differences are likely to arise. No significant efforts to provide these three requisites have been made so far and that is one of the major reasons why local control in elementary education has not worked satisfactorily. Adequate provision for this will have to be made in future if the experiment in democratic decentralisation is to be tried in earnest.

### ROLE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Voluntary agencies have played a very important part in the development of Indian education and even today they are playing a very important role in secondary and higher education. In elementary education, however, their role has changed considerably during the last 160 years.

At the opening of the nineteenth century, there were no public elementary schools and all elementary education was provided, through the indigenous schools, by the voluntary enterprise of the people. Since then a system of public elementary schools established by government as well as local authorities has been gradually evolved and today private elementary schools play a minor role in providing facilities for elementary education.

Taking the country as a whole, there were, in 1960-61, a total of 381,359 elementary schools of which only 86,751 were private. Their number varies from area to area. In states like Punjab or Maharashtra, where the tradition of public schools has been developed over a very long period, the number of private elementary schools is the smallest; while states like Madras or Bengal, where the policy of encouraging indigenous schools through grants-in-aid was adopted over a long period, have a much larger proportion of private elementary schools. The future role of private enterprise in elementary education is thus a subject of great interest at present. According to one view, private enterprise has no place in a programme of universal elementary education.

It is pointed out that, under Article 45 of the Constitution, free and compulsory education is to be provided for all children until the age of 14 years. This is interpreted to mean that no fees are to be charged in any elementary school, public or private, so that the entire cost of private elementary schools will ultimately have to be borne by public funds through grant-in-aid. Under these circumstances, it is suggested that a more straightforward course would be to permit only public elementary schools which provide free education.

Another argument put forward in support of this view is that the existence of private schools tends to perpetuate class distinctions. The richer classes of people send their children to private schools which provide a higher standard of education and consequently, the difference between them and the children of poorer classes who are compelled to attend the free public elementary schools continues to remain wide. Some persons even argue that private schools should be abolished for the purpose of raising standards in the public elementary schools. They feel that the richer, more vocal and more influential classes of society are

not interested in improving standards in public elementary schools at present because their own children attend private schools where satisfactory standards are maintained; and they feel that these classes would take greater interest in the improvement of public elementary schools if their children were compelled to attend them. In effect, they advocate a common system of free public elementary schools which all children alike would be compelled to attend.

Whatever the academic justification of such a view may be, there are several objections to its acceptance in India. It will be constitutionally impossible to abolish private elementary schools because the minority groups, whether based on religion or language, have been given the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice, (Article 30(1) of the Constitution). Moreover, private schools cannot be prevented from charging fees. The provision of free and compulsory education does not imply the abolition of fees in all elementary schools. It only implies that the state shall maintain an adequate number of free public elementary schools and that it shall take effective steps to see that free education is provided for the child of every parent who demands it. In a democracy, the parent has the basic right to choose the school for his child and if he chooses a private school which charges fees, the state has hardly any justification to interfere in the matter. It is true that existence of private schools tends to conform to distinctions of social classes. This is, however, inevitable so long as economic inequalities continue to exist in the society itself. The abolition of private schools is only a negative solution of the problem and probably a more appropriate approach would be to raise the standards in public schools. Moreover, this disadvantage of maintaining different standards is counter-balanced by the fact that the public treasury is saved the expenditure which the parents contribute to the elementary education of their children in private schools.

The general opinion in the country, therefore, is that private elementary schools should be allowed to function and even encouraged to the extent possible. There should be no restrictions on their charging fees; but grants-in-aid to them may be either refused totally or be given on such a basis that the cost per child in a private elementary school is much less to the public treasury

than that in a public elementary school. If the grant-in-aid policies to private elementary schools are regulated on these principles, private enterprise will continue to play a minor but significant role in elementary education and about 10 per cent of the children will receive their elementary education without throwing any burden on the public treasury. This will be a great advantage to the programme of universal education, especially at the present moment when we have so large a number of children to be brought into schools and the resources available are so limited.

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### Objectives of Educational Development (1965)

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1. Education, which is an instrument of social change, cannot be planned in a vacuum or in imitation of a foreign model, however good. It has to grow out of the traditions of a people, be attuned to their genius, remain integrally related to the overall programmes of national reconstruction and be responsive to the contemporary great movements of thought and action in the world.
2. With the attainment of Independence, India has launched herself upon a gigantic programme of national reconstruction whose object is to create a secular and democratic way of life that would respect the dignity of the individual, provide equality of opportunity in education, employment and cultural advance and social political and economic justice for all. This transformation, which has to be attained in the life span of a generation at the most, has four significant aspects: modernisation of a traditional social order; rapid economic growth; control of population; and educational reconstruction.

The modernisation of society is the only way in which a country can develop or even survive in the world of tomorrow. A programme of rapid economic growth is essential to ensure a substantial improvement in the standards of living of the people. The control of population is inescapable if rapid economic growth is to be promoted, adequate family and personal incomes are to be provided, and full employment is to be ensured. Similarly, educational reconstruction is necessary to raise the

vocational competence, civic effectiveness and cultural level of the people as a whole. This can be done through programmes of adult education, universal, free and compulsory school education of seven to ten years for all children, a large programme of higher education to cover all who desire and deserve it, adequate opportunities for the talented children to grow to the full, and development of research.

Taken together, this great national undertaking has no precedent in the earlier history of this country nor does it have a parallel in the contemporary history of the world because of its vastness, complexity, and its resolve to apply peaceful, democratic and humane means to achieve its ends. It is also obvious that all these four programmes are inter-dependent and that a simultaneous advance will be needed on all these fronts. Education, however, occupies a central position in the entire process because it has a role of primacy in modernisation and because it alone can create the necessary motivation and know-how among the people, both for population control and for economic growth.

3. The creation of an adequate system of education, which would enable the country to put across its programme of national reconstruction, thus becomes a goal of the highest significance to which the best efforts of the state and the people have to be devoted. This can be done in the shortest time and the most effective manner, if proper attention is given to certain fundamental issues such as those relating to the objectives, structure, content, personnel needs, organisation and financial support of the national system of education. This paper deals with the first of these, viz., objectives of educational development.
4. What should be the objectives of a national system of education for India? Since educational reconstruction is a means to national development, its objectives really flow from the national goals which can be readily identified from the Constitution and the Five Year Plans. These can be conveniently divided into three groups.

The first group which is essentially political in character includes three goals—democracy, secularism and national integration.

The second which aims principally at social and economic transformation includes another three – adoption of science and technology, securing rapid economic growth and modernisation of the traditional social order.

The third group, which is essentially educational in character, is implicit in the political, economic and social objectives stated above and includes equalisation of educational opportunities, pursuit of excellence and academic freedom.

These nine objectives, with their important implications for educational reconstruction, are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### DEMOCRACY

5. India has adopted democracy as a form of government and the sovereign democratic republic, which the Constitution has created, can be strengthened and consolidated only if there is an educated electorate imbued with a sense of civic duties and responsibilities, a competent leadership in all walks of life, and a cultivation of attitudes and values which makes democracy not only a form of government but also a way of life. The realisation of these objectives becomes obviously the responsibility of the national system of education which must strive to consolidate democracy through several significant programmes. First and foremost of these is the provision of free and compulsory education of good quality for all children till the age of 14 years, as directed in Article 45 of the Constitution. This should however, be regarded as the minimum essential and, in view of the need to develop agriculture and industries or modernising the social order, it would be necessary to extend it to the age of 16 as early as possible.

In addition, it will be necessary to develop a programme of adult education aimed, not only at liquidation of

illiteracy, but also at raising the vocational efficiency, civic effectiveness and the general and cultural level of the average citizen. The second programme would strive to train an efficient leadership in all walks of life by providing equal access for secondary and higher education to all children, irrespective of caste, religion, sex or place of residence, and by helping talented children from all strata of society to develop their potential to the full.

What is even more important, these two programmes would have to be supplemented by a third, viz., the inculcation of essential democratic qualities such as self-control, tolerance, mutual goodwill and willingness to listen to and, where necessary, to concede to the 'other' points of view.

#### SECULARISM

6. The second national value is secularism, so essential in a situation where the objective is to enable communities of profoundly differing convictions or radically divergent outlooks on the universe to live together, not only in harmony, but in active and responsible collaboration in running a democratic state. This also has large implications for education, the more important of which are: to develop a concept of secularism suited to Indian conditions and acceptable to all communities; to evolve attitudes, not of religious nihilism, but of tolerance and respect for all religions and of a deep concern for the spiritual and moral values of life without burdening them with the ritual, dogma or authoritarianism which often goes with traditional religion; to make religion mostly a personal concern of one's relationship with the ultimate reality and independent both of the civic life which one may share with all other religious groups and the loyalty which one must offer to the state. It also raises the complex and difficult issue of religious instruction in schools which would be discussed later.

#### NATIONAL INTEGRATION

7. The third goal is national integration, the welding of the multiracial, multi-religious and multilingual society that

India is into a strong, united nation in which every group offers ungrudging loyalty to the Constitution Obviously, this requires significant political, economic and administrative measures to establish a rule of justice and fair-play that would overcome the fears, prejudices and mistrusts of different social cultural, linguistic and regional groups against one another which, unfortunately, are often justified. In addition, it has immense implications for education which can create emotional ties based on patriotism so that all divisive trends are eliminated and all cohesive and centripetal forces are encouraged to the utmost. These would include:

- An emphasis on the love of the motherland and creation of an impassioned commitment to the values she stands for; encouraging the students to become familiar with the life in all parts of the country introducing as large a common core of knowledge as possible in the curricula of educational institutions in all areas; teaching past history on appropriate national lines; opening up multiple channels of communication between different linguistic groups through the development studies of the other major Indian languages in every linguistic area; developing Hindi and English as link languages; equalising educational opportunities in all parts of the country – for the ordinary as well as the gifted child; maintaining educational institutions at the national level to which students from all parts of India would be admitted on equal terms; promoting the mobility of teachers and students; and building up of an intelligentsia which, while belonging to all parts of the country, all religious and all linguistic or social groups, will be imbued with a strong sense of patriotism and brotherhood, have a close identification with the masses and share a deep and common commitment to the values and programmes of national reconstruction.

#### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

8. The fourth objective is the adoption of science and technology which are now determining the shape of the

modern world to an ever-increasing extent and the intelligent and balanced promotion of which becomes a paramount responsibility of the national system of education in India. By harnessing the resources of Nature to his service, science and technology are helping man to banish ill-health, poverty and ignorance and to make the 'good life' which had hitherto been the privilege of a small minority, available to the masses as well. They have now revolutionised the nature of 'work' itself.

Right till the end of the middle ages, work was essentially manual and needed little intellectual ability. Since productivity was poor, it also became low-paid and akin to drudgery. Consequently, productive work was generally relegated to the ignorant masses who lived on the verge of poverty and toiled hard to maintain a small elite in reasonable comfort and leisure which enable it to pursue the higher things of life. The 'educated' man thus became a parasite, and the ignorant peasant or artisan, the real productive worker.

Science and technology have revolutionised all this and related education more closely to productivity. Work in industry or on the farm has now become more productive, remunerative and free of drudgery. The traditional antithesis between 'brain' and 'hand' is also tending to disappear because the finest talents are required for research in technology and therefore even at lower levels of work, brain has become far more important than brawn. The educated person has, therefore, become the most important resource of production and the uneducated person, an unproductive burden on society. A virtuous circle is thus set up, education leading to an increase in production and an increase in wealth providing the means for a larger provision of education. A high level of education for all and scope for the highest development of the talented individuals therefore, ceases to be a mere desideratum or a pious utopia; it becomes, not only a feasible achievement, but an essential condition for growth and even survival.

9. Great as these contributions of science to the material well-being of man are, it has also significant contributions to make to his cultural development. Science strengthens the commitment of man to free enquiry and to the quest for truth as his highest duty and moral obligation. It loosens the bonds of dogmatism, assists in lessening ideological tensions and is a powerful dispeller of fear and superstition, of fatalism and passive resignation. Although it is largely occupied with the understanding of Nature at present, its development is tending more and more to help man understand himself and his place in the universe. The sciences and the humanities are thus tending to come closer and the pursuit of mere material affluence and power is likely to give way to a pursuit of higher values and fulfilment so as to create an age of science and spirituality. The Indian civilisation has developed one of the finest philosophical traditions of the world. But its significance and contribution to human thought would be much greater if it could be enriched by science which, for some reason or the other, did not develop here in the past. A study of science can thus be a significant tool for bringing about a cultural renaissance in India based on a happy blend of her eternal spiritual values and rich traditional art forms with the new scientific outlook and knowledge.
10. One more point. Science and technology are now growing at a tremendous pace in the world: scientific knowledge is being doubled in a period of about ten years and technology is keeping pace with science. India will have to absorb all the accumulated fund of this knowledge and also keep pace with it, if only it is to survive in the highly competitive modern world. But that is hardly enough. India cannot depend for ever on the researches conducted elsewhere for the development of her agriculture and industry; nor can she remain, consistent with her self-respect, merely at the receiving end of this great human endeavour to widen the frontiers of knowledge. The development of research in all branches of learning, and particularly in science and technology, thus becomes a significant task for Indian education.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH

11. The fifth national objective, which has an obvious high priority in a poor country like India, is rapid economic growth. The progress made in this regard in the first three Plans (1951-66) leaves much to be desired as the statistics in Table 1 will show.
12. It will be seen that the rate of growth of total national income was only 3.9 per cent per year which is far from adequate. What is worse, the total population increased, during the same period, at 2.1 per cent per year so that the national dividend (or national income per head of population) has increased only from Rs. 283.6 in 1951 to Rs. 363.8 in 1966. Because of this meagre increase, the country has not been able to solve the pressing problems of national economy some of which have even been aggravated. For instance, capital formation has not risen to levels essential for rapid economic growth; the level of expenditure on social services (and especially on education) has been meagre; unemployment has increased rather than decreased; food shortages have become acute, necessitating heavy imports; and the level of private consumption has continued to remain low. What is even worse, a recent study showed that even this low rate of consumption is very unevenly distributed and that the lowest 60 per cent of the population have a consumption level of less than Rs. 25 per head of population and that the poorest 10 per cent had incomes of less than Rs. 10 per month!
13. If this depressing situation is to be changed, it is essential to make a bolder and more imaginative attempt at economic growth during the next three or four Plans. The main strategy would be to attack the problem vigorously and simultaneously on three fronts: more rapid economic growth, population control, and more equitable distribution of wealth. The main developments in this regard as they might be visualised over the next twenty years are shown in Table 2.

Table 1  
Economic Growth in India(1951-66)

	1951	1956	1961	1966 (Estimates)	Rate of growth (1951-66)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Total national income in millions of Rs. (1960-61 prices)	102,400	121,300	141,400	180,000	—
2. Average annual rate of growth of national income in the preceding quinquennium (Percentage)	—	3.5	3.1	4.7	3.9
3. Total population (in millions)	361.1	391.6	439.2	494.8	—
4. Average annual rate of growth of population in the preceding quinquennium (Percentage)	—	1.6	2.3	2.4	2.1
5. National income per head of Population (Rs)	283.6	309.8	321.9	363.8	—
6. Average annual rate of growth of national dividend in the preceding quinquennium (Percentage)	—	1.8	0.8	2.4	1.6
7. Total expenditure on social services Per head of population (Rs)	2.3	3.9	6.4	14.1	12.8

(Contd...)

8. Total expenditure on education per head of population (Rs)	3.2	4.8	7.8	11.0	8.6
9. Rate of capital formation (as Percentage of national income)	4.7	8.1	11.5	16.1	8.6
10. Private consumption per head of population (Rs)	—	272.0	292.6	299.3	—
11. Estimated backlog of unemployment (in 000S)	—	5,300	8,300	12,300	—

Table 2

## Proposed Programme of Economic Growth in India (1966 – 86)

(1)	1966 (2)	1971 (3)	1976 (4)	1981 (5)	1986 (6)
1. Birth-rate per 1,000 of population	41.0	36.9	31.8	24.8	17.8
2. Death-rate per 1,000 of population	15.8	12.6	10.4	9.3	8.1
3. Growth-rate per 1,000 of population	25.2	24.3	21.4	15.5	9.7
4. Total population in millions	494.8	559.6	630.2	694.9	743.9
5. Total national income in million of Rs. (growth-rate of 7.3% per year)	180,000	261,500	309,000	515,300	727,000
a) Agriculture or primary sector (growth-rate of					

(Contd...)

4.3% per year)	76,800	96,729	61,500	147,824	179,600
b) Secondary or industries sector (growth-rate of 10.1% per year)	34,900	58,807	100,400	155,187	239,500
c) Tertiary or services sector (growth-rate of 7.8% per year)	68,300	105,964	147,100	212,289	307,900
6. National income per head of population (Rs)	364	467	586	742	977
7. Public consumption per head of population	54.2	66.6	82.4	107.2	139.8
8. Capital formation (as percentage of national income)	16.1	20.7	21.1	21.2	23.9
9. Expenditure on social services per head of population (Rs)	14.1	23.1	35.0	52.9	80.3
10 Private consumption per head of population (Rs)	299.3	367.7	452.7	566.7	705.5

14. The basic assumption made here is that the minimum economic growth that would be reached and maintained over the next two decades is 7 per cent per year. On this basis, the total national income can be raised from Rs. 180,000 million in 1966 to Rs. 727,000 million in 1986. This is possible through making larger investments in economic growth- the rate of capital formation rising to about 21 per cent as early as possible and ultimately to about 24 per cent and through modernisation of agriculture and rapid industrialisation.

If, side by side, an attempt is also to be made to control population and to reduce the birth-rate so that a 'three-



child ceiling' per family would be universal by 1981 and a large proportion of families would even adopt a 'two-child ceiling' by 1986, the total population in 1986 would rise only to 744 million and, in consequence, the national dividend would rise more steeply- from Rs. 364 in 1966 to Rs. 977 in 1986. This will make it possible to provide full employment, to raise expenditure on social services in general and on education in particular, to a substantial extent. It will also improve substantially private consumption or the standard of living of the people; and if a simultaneous attempt could also be made to distribute incomes more equitably, it may be possible to ensure that the minimum level of income per head of population does not fall below Rs. 35 per month.

15. It is easy to see that only a large programme of economic development of this order can secure the needed resources for creating an adequate system of education, both in quantity and in quality. What is even more important to note, however, is the point that such economic growth is not possible unless the educational system is also reconstructed simultaneously and related to productivity. For instance, rapid economic growth needs an adequate stock of trained manpower of the required quality and it is the responsibility of education to provide this. Education in India has not so far been able to discharge this responsibility satisfactorily; it has, in the past, catered mainly to the needs of a part of the public and health services and, more recently, to those of industry to some extent. But it has not yet been properly developed to meet the needs of agriculture a programme which will now have to be given the highest priority, while continuing the further development of technical and medical education. Research in the basic sciences will also have to be developed and the large number of high-level scientists needed for the growth of economy will have to be produced. With a view to increasing the educational and efficiency level of all future entrants to the working force, the system of general education will have to be expanded, improved in quality and more directly connected to productivity as a measure of long-term reform.

Side by side, it will also be essential, both as a short-term and long-term measure, to develop a large programme of in-service or on the job training for all adult workers whether in agriculture or in industry. This should be built round the three foci of vocational competence, civil effectiveness and family planning and aim at the creation of such attitudes as favour economic growth, viz., Plan-mindedness, preparedness to engage oneself in hard work, and willingness to cut down current consumption with a view to larger capital formation.

16. This last point is of very great importance. While it is the duty of educational institutions to try to foster these attitudes through properly designed programmes, it is necessary to remember that such attitudes can be properly developed only when the efforts of educational institutions are supported by appropriate political decisions.

It is natural for a person to look only after his own or family interests and to desire to work less and spend more. But no rapid economic growth is possible if such attitudes are allowed to remain as the sole motivation of workers. What is needed is a situation in which the average worker would place 'social well-being' above his 'personal interests' and be willingly prepared, in the larger interests of the succeeding generations, to work harder and to live on less.

In a totalitarian state, such decisions can be taken by a few and imposed on all others by force. But in a democracy, these can be taken by the authorities only if they find general popular support. This would be possible under two conditions. The first is to create a social climate of a passionate commitment to national reconstruction which would necessarily involve hard work and austerity in life. It is obviously the responsibility of the political and intellectual leadership of the country to create this social climate by putting these values to practice in its own life in the first instance. The second is to create a socialistic pattern of society which can make each individual feel that his labours are helping to build a better and juster social order and that the fruits of his labours will return to him directly in the form of a higher standard of life and indirectly through various forms of social security.

### MODERNISATION

17. The sixth national objective is to modernise the traditional social order. The most important instrument of modernisation, the adoption of science and technology, has been discussed earlier. It has, however, several other important aspects which need attention.
18. There are three main distinctions between a modern and traditional society. The first of these relates to knowledge. In a traditional society, the quantum of knowledge is limited and is growing at a slow pace so that the main aim of education (which is generally restricted to a small class) is to 'preserve' knowledge. A modern society, on the other hand, is characterised, not only by the large stock of knowledge it has, but also by the tremendous pace of its growth. The main task for education in the modern society, therefore is to 'advance' knowledge and to spread it as widely as possible. The obvious implications of this situation for education are:

Elementary and secondary education, instead of being the monopoly of a few, should be provided for all so that each individual is educated to a point where he can launch himself on a programme of further self-education without much difficulty; adult education, which becomes extremely significant, should be provided on a very large scale; talent should be discovered and allowed to grow to the full; and far greater emphasis should be placed on higher education and research.

19. The second distinction relates to the rate of social change. In a traditional society, change is so slow that the conservatism of the educational system does comparatively little harm. It is possible for the teacher to train his students precisely for the kind of life that would await them or to provide them, as it were, with a complete and dependable 'road map' for their life's journey. In a modern society, change becomes so rapid that the teacher can at best provide his student with a compass and not with a road map. The main implication of this situation for education is the need for dynamism.

An educational system which does not continually renovate itself soon becomes an anachronism and hampers progress by creating a lag between its purposes and standards and the imperatives of development, both in quality and quantity. Moreover, education has to concern itself, not so much with the imparting of mere knowledge or the preparation of a finished product as with the inculcation of interest and curiosity, habit of self-study capacity to think and judge for oneself, and the development of proper interests, attitudes and values.

20. The third distinction between traditional and modern societies is that the latter offer a larger way of life to the individual who is thus called upon to decide between a variety of choices open to him at several crucial stages in life. While this freedom to choose has its own obvious advantages it also creates some problems of great significance. For instance, the future of the society will depend upon the type of choices which each individual will make and this, in its turn, would depend upon his motivation and sense of values. In a traditional society, these are provided by religion or social customs but they may now have to be provided on some secular basis such as sense of social responsibility or consideration for others. In short, the significance of the individual and the need to provide him, not only with the knowledge and skills required for modernism, but also with a 'compass' to enable him to find his way in the labyrinth of multiple choices, assume paramount importance and have to form the core of the educational programme
21. It has to be remembered that once society launches upon a programme of modernisation, there is no turning back nor any half-way house until the end is reached. In the initial stages, modernisation disturb the traditional equilibrium which despite its manifest inequalities, had been reached and maintained over centuries. This naturally creates a host of new problems in the social, economic and cultural spheres. But if one tinkers with science or technology or tries to march with faltering steps and if one's commitments and convictions are half-hearted and

lack faith, the new situation may turn out to be worse than the earlier one and this is probably what is happening in the country at present. The only solution to these transitional problems is to move rapidly forward to create a new equilibrium, based on full modernisation of the society.

22. The modernisation of a society is never the product of abstract forces nor the work of a single class. It always is, and must be, the task of a whole national community. For this purpose, the educational system will have to aim at providing a cultural renaissance which would be different, in three significant ways, from the existing social awakening created by modern education.

The first refers to the need to change the size and composition of the intelligentsia and also to raise its academic competence. Its size is very small at present less than 1 per cent of the population and it will have to be increased to about 10 per cent to make a significant dent on the large and complex problems of modernisation; its composition, instead of being restricted to the top social and economic classes as at present, will have to be altered to include the talented persons from all strata of society and its academic competence which is not of a high order at present, would have to be increased and made comparable with that in advanced countries because, at this level, standards of attainment and competence cut across national boundaries and become truly international.

The second change relates to the intellectual and cultural level of the masses: this has remained low for centuries and it will now have to be raised substantially through the provision of universal elementary (and even secondary) education and a large programme of adult education.

The third change relates to the relationship between the intelligentsia and the masses which, at present, is more of alienation and exploitation than of understanding and service. The intelligentsia of tomorrow, however, will have to combine 'intellect' with 'compassion,' feel deep love and sympathy for the unprivileged masses, and function largely as a service group. The reconstruction of education

to be attempted in the future will, therefore, have to be geared to these basic objectives.

#### EQUALISATION OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

23. Whether from the point of view of democracy, national integration, economic development or modernisation of social order, two major educational policies stand out for emphasis: provision of equality of educational opportunity and cultivation of excellence. It must be remembered that education, like knowledge, is a double-edged tool. It can be and has been utilised by small privileged groups to keep the masses in slavery and poverty. But it can lead to the emancipation of man if it is given an egalitarian objective through the equalisation of opportunities. Similarly, education of the right 'quality' can lead to economic growth and cultural advance; but poor or bad education can create the opposite results. These two programmes are, therefore, so important that they deserve to be regarded as the main objectives of educational reconstruction in future.
24. The problem of providing equality of educational opportunity differs from one stage of education to another. At the elementary stage, where the goal is to provide free and compulsory education for all children till they reach the age of 14 years, there is no question of selective admissions. There are also no difficult problems relating to differentiation in curricula because all children have to be put through an essentially common programme of education. The equalisation of educational development at this stage, therefore, has two main aspects: the quantitative aspect of enrolling every child in the age-group 6-7 (or 5-6) in class I and ensuring that he remains in school till the age of 14; and the qualitative aspect of maintaining such standards in elementary schools so that the objectives of elementary education may be realised in practice. In both these aspects, there are, at present, appreciable inequalities of educational opportunity.

From the regional point of view, there are wide gaps between advanced States like Kerala or Madras and backward States like Rajasthan or Uttar Pradesh. At the

State level, there are still greater differences of achievement between the advanced and the backward Districts. Even within the same district, there are marked differences between one tehsil and another and even within the same tehsil, not all villages are equally advanced. There are considerable differences between urban and rural areas. From the social point of view, there is a great inequality of educational development between boys and girls and also between the advanced classes, on the one hand, and the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, on the other. Differences in the quality of elementary education are not readily measurable, but there is enough evidence to show that there are considerable differences in the quality of education provided in the elementary schools in the different parts of the country.

In the next three plans, the expansion and improvement of elementary education would have to be so planned as to reduce all such inequalities to the minimum and to ensure that no part of the country falls below certain minimum levels. These levels, in themselves, should kept continually rising from Plan to Plan.

25. In secondary and higher education, the problem of equalising educational opportunity assumes a slightly different form. Here, considerations of regional inequalities are not so important as ensuring that children from the different social and economic groups have an equal access to secondary and higher education, and that all talented children, irrespective of the social strata to which they belong, get adequate opportunities for full development.

Unfortunately, national data on the social and economic backgrounds of students in secondary schools and colleges are not available. But from the few studies that have been conducted in some parts of the country, there is reason to conclude that the facilities for secondary and higher education are very largely utilised at present by boys, by the urban people, by the middle and the upper classes, by the services and the professions, and by the people in the upper 10 per cent of the population.

In future plans of educational reconstruction, a major objective will be to see that access to secondary and higher education is equally open to all children and that the benefits of such education go to the more talented children in all the social strata than to all or most of the children in some selected strata of society. This will essentially need a large and well-planned programme of scholarships.

26. Some complex problems arise in equalising opportunities in secondary and higher education because of two factors: the limited facilities that can be provided at present due to inherent restrictions on the availability of teachers, materials and funds; and the need to diversify courses and to prepare students for all the different walks of life.

In an era of rising expectations and an increasing pool of abilities, there will always be a larger demand on secondary and higher education than the country can afford to provide. Similarly, not all professions can be equally attractive (although there is no justification for the extreme variations that exist at present in this regard), so that there would always be severe competition for some vocations while others would tend to be neglected or adopted only under pressure of circumstances. This situation raises two problems: (1) to relate the output of secondary schools and colleges to the manpower needs of development and (2) to help each student to choose the career best suited to his own capacities and aptitudes. The first of these is comparatively simple and involves only administrative and financial issues. But the second, which involves human aspirations, is more complicated.

In a democracy, the natural desire of every student is to strive for the positions in life and this is what is now happening in India. All students want to get top administrative posts in government or industry or to become doctors and engineers and this creates intensive pressures on secondary and university education. In their turn, these pressures lead to a political indecision to adopt the open-door policy which, in the absence of adequate resources, leads naturally to a deterioration of standards. What is needed is a 'cooling off' of these ambitions and the channelising of students into different walks of life at

appropriate stages. This can be done by reducing the extreme disparity of remuneration and other benefits in different professions, by provision of guidance, and by evolving satisfactory methods of selection.

The ultimate objective should be to ensure that, in as large a proportion of cases as possible, the choice of a career or educational course is the result of a process of 'self-selection' by the student and that, where a hard choice is necessary between a number of applicants, the decisions are based (and also 'appear' to be based) on objective criteria that ensure justice and fair-play to all.

#### PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

27. Whether education leads to progress or to deterioration depends partly on quantity but essentially on quality. This is particularly true in secondary and higher education. In the last 15 years, a good deal of expansions has taken place in all sectors of education. While this is both welcome and creditable and will have to be continued still further it is evident that the standards of education have not risen adequately to meet the needs of the situation—present or future. It is, therefore, extremely urgent now to concentrate on the improvement of standards and to adopt the pursuit of excellence as a very important goal of educational development.

28. This pursuit of excellence has two aspects, the first of which relates to the identification and development of talent. To begin with, this problem arises at the end of primary stage when talented children would have to be identified and placed in good institutions so as to be under the influence of good teachers and given suitable scholarships to overcome financial handicaps to further study. The same process is to be repeated again at the secondary and university stages.

Quality improves only when good students are exposed to good influences and this process goes on yielding increasingly profitable results in a geometric progression with each generation of students. Unfortunately, a large-scale policy of this type is not yet developed in India. At

the end of the primary stage, there is hardly any programme for the identification of talent and for grant of scholarships for continuing in the middle schools. At the secondary stage, a few scholarships are provided for good students by the state governments but their number is far too meagre to meet the needs of the situation. At the university stage, the Government of India has recently initiated a fairly large scheme of scholarships and good as this beginning is, it suffers from three handicaps:

- a) its size is still rather small;
- b) a good deal of the available talent in the country is already eliminated, owing to the failure of the scholarship system at the lower stages, before the Matriculation examination is reached; and
- c) there is no corresponding scheme of developing good institutions and placing the scholarship-holders in them.

It is this failure to tap talent from all strata of society and to develop it to the full that is mainly responsible for the scarcity of talent that is now felt in all walks of life and in all developmental schemes. A programme of cultivation of talent will, therefore, have to be given a very high priority in all future plans of educational reconstruction.

29. The second aspect of the pursuit of excellence involves the continual deepening of the content of education at all levels. This deepening implies a continual increase in the knowledge-content of education in order to keep pace with the expanding knowledge in the world. It also implies the development of better skills because the efficiency and productivity of workers has to be continually increased. Similarly, it implies an increasing emphasis on the building up of character because modern society, which provides greater freedom and a larger way of life, also demands a greater share of such basic qualities as humanism, self-restraint, tolerance, goodwill, justice, integrity, service without self-involvement (*anasakti*), reverence for the holy, and love, to mention only a few.

In the advanced countries, these objectives are being attempted in three ways: the lengthening of the total period of formal education and supplementing it by an expanding and deepening programme of adult education; putting more content within the same period of schooling through the adoption of improved techniques and provision of better facilities; and above all, by improving the level of teachers, both in general education and in professional competence.

Even a cursory study of the existing situation will show that this is not happening in all parts of India at present, that it is not happening in all parts of India at present, that it is not happening with adequate speed, or that in some areas, even the actual reverse is happening. The conditions and motivation for hard work and the pursuit of excellence seem to be deteriorating and are often absent. It is the standard of our second degree that is now comparable to that of the first degree in the good universities of advanced countries and much of the work which is done at the so-called 'university stage' in India is really done at the school level in advanced countries. The physical conditions and social climate of a large number of our institutions are so poor that education often makes a negative rather than a positive contribution to life. The feedback of the best men available into the teaching profession is small and the care and upbringing of the rising generation is being entrusted, more and more, to the weaker products of the present educational system.

One of the most significant programmes of the future reconstruction of education is to reverse all such trends and to orientate education firmly to the lodestar of pursuit of excellence.

#### UNIFORMITY VS. DIVERSITY

30. It is sometimes argued that a national system of education should have a uniform pattern of school and college classes with uniform curricula, textbooks and teaching methods. A little reflection will, however show that such a development is neither possible nor desirable.

The Indian situation with its federal constitution (wherein several constituent states are larger than many European nations), its multi-party system of democratic government, its mixed society consisting of highly sophisticated groups who live side by side with the most primitive ones, its mixed economy which includes some of the most modern factories as well as traditional agriculture, and its multiplicity of languages with a primacy for none, presents such a complex picture that it resembles 'a miniature world' rather than a nation. Because of this context, there has never been a uniform pattern of school and college classes in this country and no attempt to create such a pattern has ever succeeded. What is even more important, it has to be remembered that this variety of the Indian scene can be a great source of strength in the long run although it creates some minor problems which fortunately are not difficult of solution.

The capacity of an organisation to survive and grow depends upon its capacity to adjust itself to its environment and this increases in direct proportion to the potential for variation. With every state and even district as a viable unit for experimentation. India has a unique opportunity to foster growth through freedom and experimentation and this has to be exploited to the fullest extent possible. Yet another objective of educational reconstruction in the future, therefore, should be to turn away from the sterile pursuit of external uniformity, authoritarianism and prescription and to concentrate on the more difficult and challenging task of evolving a national system of education which has a common underlying unity of purposes, beliefs, and values but is clothed within a diversity of forms designed to suit varied local conditions. This can only be done by preserving the academic freedom of teachers and by giving encouragement of initiative, creativity and experimentation.

31. It will thus be seen that the reconstruction of education in India will have to be directed to the realisation of several significant goals which are embodied or implied in the Constitution and the Five Year Plans, viz., the strengthening of democracy, secularism and national

integration; adoption of science and technology, promoting rapid economic growth by supplying skilled manpower and raising the educational and efficiency level of the working force as a whole; assisting in the modernisation of the traditional social order; equalising educational opportunities; pursuit of excellence; and promoting growth through academic freedom and encouragement of initiative, creativity and experimentation.

These objectives form, as it were, the soul of the national system of education and they can become a living reality only if the entire body of students, teachers, and educational administrators develops, not only an awareness of these goals, but also a passionate commitment to their realisation. They will also have to be translated in concrete terms with reference to the curricula at all stages of education and will have to permeate the functioning of all types of educational institutions.

An educational system so reconstructed would endeavor to provide adequate and inspiring opportunities to our youth for participation in national reconstruction and in the achievement of national goals and thereby strive to generate, in the young generation, a sense of purposefulness and mission, dedication, confidence in themselves and faith in the country's future. To create such a system of education as early as possible and to maintain it at the highest level of efficiency is the challenge which the students, teachers and educational administrators are facing at present. It is upon their response to it that the future of this country depends.

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### The Three-Language Formula (1966)

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The Three-Language Formula was born with the Constitution in 1950. In order to persuade the Constituent Assembly to agree to the eventual adoption of Hindi as the official language of the Union— it did so without a division—three concessions had to be made: (1) A period of 15 years was allowed for the continuance of English in order to enable the non-Hindi speaking areas to prepare themselves; (2) It was agreed that Hindi should be developed, not in a purist form, but to represent the composite culture of India; and (3) It was also decided to equalise the burden of studying languages by making it obligatory on the Hindi speaking areas to study a modern Indian language on the same basis on which Hindi is studied in non-Hindi areas. A reference to these three ideas is found in the Constituent Assembly debates on the language clauses. It is in the third of these concessions that the Three-Language formula has its origin.

#### UNIVERSITY COMMISSION

References to this political agreement are found in the reports of the University Education Commission (1948-49) and the Secondary Education Commission (1952), although they do not use the expression "three-language formula". The University Education Commission recommended that, at the school stage, both English and Hindi should be studied for a period of six years and that, in Hindi-speaking areas, a modern Indian language should be taught in lieu of Hindi. This virtually implied that both English and Hindi would be taught at the middle school (classes VI-VII) and secondary (classes IX-XI) stages.

*\*Mainstream, Saturday, October 8, 1966*



The Secondary Education Commission proposed some significant changes in these proposal. For instance, it recommended that both English and Hindi should be taught compulsorily at the middle school stage (classes VI-VII) but it also opined that the two additional languages should not be introduced in the same year. This implies that, at the middle school stage, English would be studied for three years and Hindi for two years, or viceversa. At the secondary stage, the Commission recommended that only two languages should be studied and that the study of either English or Hindi, at the option of the student, may be discontinued.

#### REDUCING BURDEN

The objective of the Commission was thus to reduce the burden of learning languages and its proposals virtually implied that a student completing the secondary school in non-Hindi areas would study both English and Hindi, one of these languages being studied for a minimum period of two years. In the Hindi areas the same conditions would apply to the study of English and a modern Indian language.

It is unfortunate that, in spite of the agreement reached in the Constituent Assembly and in spite of the recommendations of the University Education Commission and the Secondary Education Commission, very little was done in practice to implement the three-language formula. The record of the non-Hindi areas was, in some ways, better because the study of Hindi did get underway to some extent. On the other hand, the Hindi areas hardly made any attempt to develop the study of modern Indian languages.

The question, therefore was taken up for consideration by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1956. It is worth noting that the expression "three-language formula" was used for the first time at this meeting when the Board adopted the following resolution:

#### CABE Recommendation

*Item 11:* The Board discussed at length the place of English in secondary schools. The discussions revealed a definite cleavage of opinion with regard to the place of English and Hindi at the secondary level. Finally, however, the Board accepted the

recommendations of the ALL India Council for Secondary Education that provision should be made for the compulsory study of three languages at the secondary stage of education (vide suggestions of the Secondary Education Commission on curriculum Group A) and resolved to invite the opinions of the State Governments on the advisability of adopting either of the following two formulae in this connection:

1. (a) (i) Mother tongue (ii) or regional language (iii) or a composite course of mother tongue and a regional language; (iv) or a composite mother tongue and classical language; (v) or a composite course of regional language and classical language;
- (b) Hindi or English; (c) a modern Indian or a modern European language provided it has not already been taken under (a) and (b) above.
2. (a) As above
- (b) English or a modern European language.
- (c) Hindi (for non-Hindi-speaking areas) or another modern Indian languages (for Hindi speaking areas).

#### MAINSTREAM

Most of the state governments accepted the second of the two formulae proposed by the CABE; and that, on paper, is also the position at present.

It must be pointed out, however, that in spite of this specific enunciation of the three-language formula and its acceptance in principle by the state governments, implementation was far from satisfactory. The non-Hindi areas showed better progress and the study of Hindi became more general. In the Hindi areas, however, the third language taught was mostly Sanskrit and hardly any attempt was made to introduce the study of modern Indian languages. Infact, it would be no exaggeration to say that, as originally conceived, the three-language formula remained a dead letter in the Hindi areas.

The subject was, therefore, taken up again, for a detailed examination by the Emotional integration Committee, whose proposals may be briefly enumerated as follows:

**Primary Stage (Classes I-V)**

Ordinarily only one language should be studied. But English and Hindi may be introduced as additional language at this stage.

*Middle School Stage (Classes VI-VIII):* Both English and Hindi should be taught in the non-Hindi areas and English and modern Indian language should be taught in the Hindi areas.

**Secondary Stage (Classes IX and X): As above**

*Higher Secondary Stage (Classes XI and XII):* Any two languages to be taught, except the medium of instruction (which would be the mother tongue or the regional language).

Although this formula has been before the country for the last four years, hardly any action has been taken to implement it. One development which has taken place is, however, unfortunate, namely, the teaching of English is now begun to class III level in a number of States.

Meanwhile, following the disturbance over the language issue in Madras, the Congress Working Committee examined the whole problem and directed that it would be "obligatory for all the States to introduce the three-language formula in their educational curriculum, extend it to the university stage and to apply strictly."

To begin with the recommendations of the Education Commission may be briefly stated:

**Primary Stage: (Classes I-IV)**

Only one language should be studied at this stage. The commission has definitely expressed its view against the study of English or any other language at this early period.

**Middle School Stage (Classes V-VII)**

Two languages should be studied at this stage. In the Hindi areas, these would be English and Hindi. In the non-Hindi areas, these will be the mother tongue and English or Hindi all the option of the student. It is expected that a large majority of the students would choose English. But the number of children choosing Hindi will not be small and this will continually increase as Hindi becomes more important in national life.

The commission has also recommended that facilities for the study of Hindi should be provided in all schools in the non-Hindi areas and that it should be possible to study it on an optional basis.

**Lower Secondary Stage: (Classes VIII-X)**

Three languages should be studied. In the Hindi areas, these would be Hindi, English and a modern Indian language. In the non-Hindi areas, these would be the mother-tongue, English and Hindi. The Commission has made it clear that a student who had not taken Hindi at the middle school stage will be under an obligation to take Hindi at this stage.

**Higher Secondary Stage: (Classes XI-XII)**

Only two languages to be studied at this stage.

**University Stage: No Language to be Compulsory**

The Commission has recommended that, in every state, there should be a few selected schools which teach international languages other than English and particularly Russian. Similarly, in non-Hindi areas, there should also be a few selected schools teaching all modern Indian languages other than Hindi. In these schools their enrolment may not exceed 1-5 per cent of the total—the students would be free to study the international languages other than English (or modern Indian languages other than Hindi) in lieu of either English or Hindi.

The proposals of the Commission have some important implications which bring out their significance.

It has to be recognised language load is enormous at present. Minimum time which students at the middle school and secondary stages spend on the study of languages is 45 per cent of the total; and in some cases it is as high as 65 per cent. There is no hope of raising standards in education unless this load is substantially reduced.

Unfortunately, this is not the direction in which things seem to be moving at present. In fact, if the recommendation of the Congress Working Committee are adopted, the burden of studying languages will increase still further and will cover both the school and university stages. The Education Commission has

taken a rightful academic view of the problem and considerably reduced the language load.

The Commission has evolved a version of the Three-Language Formula which the Hindi areas would be in a position to implement. It has to be realised that while there is adequate motivation for students in non-Hindi areas to study Hindi, there is little or no motivation for the students in Hindi areas to study another modern Indian language. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to provide for the teaching of modern Indian languages in Hindi areas, and it is this difficulty which October 8, 1966 is partly responsible for the non-implementation of the Three-Language Formula.

Moreover, the proposal involves expenditure on a very large scale and there is almost an insurmountable difficulty of getting teachers. The Commission has, therefore, recommended that the study of the modern Indian languages in Hindi areas should be restricted to the lower secondary stage (classes VIII-X) only.

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### Long-term Educational Reconstruction in India (1966-81)

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#### SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE NEXT THREE PLANS

The next 10-15 years form the most crucial period in the history of India and the entire future of the country depends upon what happens or does not happen in this period. Since education is the most significant factor in national development, it is obvious that the entire future of the country would largely depend upon the development of Indian education during the next 10-15 years. It is, therefore, essential to take a long-term view of the problem, to prepare a perspective plan of educational development of cover the next three Plans taken together and to finalise the Fourth Five Year Plan.

The Sargent Plan prepared in 1944 tried to cover a period of 40 years. Even then, it felt that it was not probably taking a sufficiently long-range view and quoted an Eastern proverb which says that if you want to produce men, plan for a hundred years. The pace of change has very greatly quickened in recent times; but nevertheless it is both possible and desirable to look at least fifteen years ahead in order to decide the direction in which our next steps are going to be taken.

What are likely to be the special features of the next three Plans? It appears that, in attempting educational development during this period, the following five special features will have to be emphasized:

- a) *Shifting of Emphasis to Qualitative Improvement:* The first fundamental need is to shift the emphasis to qualitative improvement. The last sixteen years have been a period of

unprecedented expansion in Indian education and the tempo of expansion, at all levels in all sectors of education, has mounted up increasingly from the post-war period (1947-50) to the First Plan (1951-56) from First to the Second (1956-61) and from the second to the third (1961-66). Consequently, the quality of the education has been diluted to some extent especially because it has not been adequately emphasized at any time. The dangers of this dilution, and the possibility of still further dilution under the impact of the future expansion, have now been recognised on all hands and there is universal agreement on the view that, in the next three Plans, the emphasis will have to be shifted to qualitative improvement of education.

- b) *Continued Expansion:* This shift in emphasis does not necessarily imply a restriction on expansion. In spite of the unprecedented expansion of education which has taken place during the last 15 years, India has become, by no means, an over-educated country. In the age-group 6-14, only 60 per cent of the children would have been enrolled in schools by the end of the Third Plan. During the next 15 years therefore, universal education would have to be provided in this age-group in order to fulfil the Directive of Article 45 of the Constitution. At the secondary stage, only 16 per cent of the children in the age-group 14-17 would have been enrolled in schools in a secondary course whose duration, by and large, would be three years. By the end of the Sixth Plan, the duration of the secondary course would have to be raised to four years and the enrolments in secondary schools would have to be increased to about 40 per cent of the children in the age-group 15-18. At the university stage, the total enrolment in 1965-66 would be only 2.4 per cent of the age-group 18-23. By 1980-81, this will have to be increased to about 10 per cent of the age-group 19-24. These enrolments are, by no means, excessive when compared to the standards of education already reached in advanced countries. They are, however, the minimum essential for the industrialised modern society which we are striving to create in India. It is, therefore, evident that, during the next 15 years, the quantitative expansion of education will have to continue, in spite of

the shift in emphasis to qualitative improvement. The Third Plan will thus see the close of an era of rapid expansion in which qualitative improvement was generally less emphasized. The next 15 years will be a period when we will have to take care of quantity and quality alike.

- c) *Limitations on Financial Resources:* This simultaneous attempt to improve quantity and quality will naturally need large financial resources. Unfortunately, the Chinese aggression has created a situation wherein a substantial portion of national resources, which would otherwise have been available for developmental programmes, would be earmarked for defence preparation. This necessarily implies limitations on the resources which the public sector can provide for education. The implication is thus obvious: we shall have to attempt a much larger task in the quantitative and qualitative improvement of education with financial resources which are not expanding quite in proportion. Would this be possible?

The first reaction to this situation is likely to be negative on the ground that the 'more and better' education we need cannot be provided without a proportionate increase in educational expenditure. Such a viewpoint, however, betrays defeatism or escapism. It would be better to consider this situation as a challenge which necessitates us to think hard, even harder than the educators of advanced countries which have fewer problems to face and ampler resources to command. We can meet this situation and perform, what superficially appears to be an impossible task, by adopting a number of devices. First and foremost, we shall have to give up the very common tendency to 'imitate' the practices of advanced countries partly because these practices do not suit our conditions and partly because no mechanical limitation can ever serve a useful purpose in the solution of social or educational problems. We still also have to restrain the common trend 'to pass on our problems to foreign experts for solution', although their advice and guidance would necessarily be of much use in our efforts to solve them. We will have to devise ways and means of supplementing public support for

education, on which alone limitations are being placed by the present situation, through private sources which should be stimulated to a much greater extent than at present. We will also have to take steps to plug all causes of wastage and to devise measures to see that every naya paisa allocated to education goes the longest way. This implies careful planning and harder work on the part of all concerned—students, teachers and administrators. If these measures are attempted, it would be possible to achieve the difficult task of securing a simultaneous improvement in the quantity and quality of education in spite of a comparatively restricted allocation from public resources.

- d) *Emphasis on the Human Factor:* Educational reconstruction must emphasise the human factor because, in the last analysis, the success of an educational system is to be sought for in its products, i.e., in the cultural level, professional competence and character of the men and women who come out of its portals. This aspect of the problem has received inadequate attention in the last fifteen years and we have accustomed ourselves to the evaluation of educational progress in terms of colourless statistics—the number of students enrolled at the various stages of education and the expenditure incurred thereon. It is now being increasingly realised, however, that a mere expansion of the apparatus of education is not necessarily synonymous with progress, that bad or indifferent education can lead the country to disaster and be even worse than no education, and that what the country needs is 'more and more' of 'better and better' education which would turn out, in ever increasing numbers, competent, responsible and useful citizens who would create a richer and more just social order based on democracy.

This emphasis on the proper development of the students in its turn, needs emphasis on two other human factors. The first of these is the teacher. We need an army of good teachers, well informed, well adjusted, competent and devoted to their duty. At present, the bringing up of the next generation is being left more and more to the 'lesser' representatives of the present generation—a situation

which is fraught with danger to the entire future of the country. Instead of this, we have to create a situation where the bringing up of the next generation would be left more and more to the 'better' part of the present generation. This implies a very earnest consideration of all problems relating to teachers: improvement of their remuneration, provision of adequate retirement benefits, institution of welfare services, pre-service and in-service training, promotion of professional organisations to undertake programmes of academic betterment, and according them their rightful status as the builders of the greater India of tomorrow.

The second human factor is that of administrators. During the British period, the administrator of education was an alien who was generally unacquainted with, and incapable of understanding, the innermost aspirations of the people. When the struggle for freedom began and came to be supported, in increasing numbers, by the educated intelligentsia, he developed a police aspect wherein his primary responsibility was to see that education did not develop into antipathy to British rule. In the post-independence period, the administration of education has been fully Indianised; but the earlier 'police' traditions still continue to dominate, although in a different context. What is worse, the expansion and improvement of educational administration has generally been neglected, with the result that the education departments of today are far less equipped to deal with the immense tasks of educational reconstruction than they were at any earlier time in the past. What is needed is a substantial increase in the personnel of the education departments and a revolution in its character: they have to be converted from a body of 'administrators' who deal mainly with statistics, financial sanctions, grants-in-aid, transfers and appointments, and enquiries into all sorts of complaints, into an organisation of 'educationists' who would be imaginative enough to realise the goals of educational reconstruction, sensitive enough to know the needs and demands of the people, competent enough to plan and implement satisfactory programmes of educational reconstruction and able enough to function as the friends, philosophers and guides of teachers who, in their turn, would extend a similar service to parents and students.

The body of students will also have to play its proper role in the proposed educational reconstruction side by side with the teachers and educational administrators. In the first instance, they will have to work far harder than at present. A great Indian educator has humorously observed that, in our schools, and particularly in our colleges, the vacations extend from one end of the year to another. This is a profound statement which highlights the fact that Indian students work far less than those in other advanced countries, particularly at the secondary and university stages and that their motivation leaves much to be desired. Simultaneously we will have to see that we give the students a much better deal than at present by providing better financial support and by making better provision for their residence, studies, health and welfare. These and other problems of the student world will have to receive the utmost emphasis during the next fifteen years.

#### EVALUATION OF PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVE PLANNING

The tasks to be faced in the Fourth and subsequent Plans are thus extremely complex and difficult. Fortunately, we are in a better position to tackle them successfully. This is due mainly to the experience gained in educational planning in India during the last 25 years.

The idea of educational planning was first put forward by the National Planning Committee which was appointed by the Indian National Congress, as early as 1938, under the Chairmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This Committee has published a volume on education which outlines the first ideas of a planned development of education in India. This was followed by the plan for Post-War Educational Development in India, popularly known as the Sargent Plan, which was published in 1944. It visualised, in a period of 40 years (1945-85), the provision of universal education to all children in the age-group 6-14 and the development of secondary and university education on a selective and restricted basis. Although it has several technical flaws, quite understandable in a first exercise of this type, it still remains the one and only comprehensive document on long-term educational planning in the country. Between 1947 and 1951, attempts were made to develop education somewhat on the lines indicated by

the Sargent Plan; but for several reasons, the Sargent Plan was not accepted as national policy. This would not have meant serious harm if another long-term plan had been prepared instead. But that was not done and the First Five Year Plan was prepared as a short-term plan on its own merits. This was followed by two more Plans, also prepared on the same ad hoc and short-term basis. As the mid-term appraisal of the Third Plan has just been completed, we may be said to have practical experience of educational planning for 25 years and of serious implementation of educational plans for about 15 years. Unfortunately, no systematic evaluation of this experience has been made so far. If this could be done in the next year or two, we will have very useful data on the successes and failures of our attempt to reconstruct education. These will obviously be of immense use for preparation of future plans in general and the Fourth Five Year Plan in particular.

Educational planning must necessarily take a long-range view. It is, therefore, unfortunate that we have not accepted the Sargent Plan and have also not been able to produce an alternative comprehensive perspective plan for educational development in India. A suggestion to this effect was made at the beginning of the Third Plan; but it remained unimplemented. It would, therefore, be extremely worthwhile now to prepare a perspective plan of educational development in India between 1965-66 and 1980-81, especially as the background data for such planning are now available and to orientate the Fourth Plan against the background of this perspective plan. The advantages of this exercise are obvious. But to be of immediate practical value, it must also be attempted during the next year or two.

With these preliminary observations, we may now proceed to give a broad outline of a perspective plan of educational development during the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Plans and to indicate, against its background, the broad outline of the Fourth Plan and the major problems to be faced therein. This task may be attempted in three stages: in the first, we will deal with a few general issues which relate to all stages of education; in the second, we will deal with the different sectors of education; and in the third, we will deal with a few important aspects of the problem of teachers, administration, and finance.

### OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION

The first issue to be raised relates to the objectives of education and to the major educational programmes to be devised to achieve them. Some of the objectives of education are absolute in the sense that they are true of all countries and of all times. The 'harmonious development of the personality of a child' is, for instance, an absolute objective of education. We have concentrated far too much on such absolute concepts because they are easy to be borrowed from standard textbooks written elsewhere. It may be pointed out, however, that it is not enough to state the absolute objectives of education only. It is also necessary to supplement them by a clear statement of topical objectives which are true of a given country at a given time and which, therefore, vary from time to time and place to place. There is no inherent contradiction between the absolute and topical objectives. On the other hand, the topical objectives are of very great practical importance because they give 'a local habitation and a name' to what often tends to be an 'airy nothing'.

An illustration may help to clarify the point. The objective of 'national emotional integration' is obviously of paramount importance in the India of today, when the unifying forces (such as those created by the anti-imperialist struggle for freedom) have either ceased to operate or are weakening and fissiparous tendencies have come to the surface, particularly after the reorganisation of the states on the linguistic basis. The Prime Minister has observed that this objective is of such vital significance that, if it is not achieved, we will not be in a position to defend our hard-won freedom. The problem of achieving national emotional integration through education becomes, therefore, a 'topical' objective of education of the highest significance during the next 10 to 15 years. Other examples of programmes related to the attainment of significant topical objectives of education can be easily given: (i) development of values, attitudes and habits which are favourable to the stabilisation of democracy which we have adopted as a way of life; (2) building up of moral and spiritual values in an educational system which has necessarily to be secular in character; (3) preservation of ancient traditional values and their harmonisation with the needs of a modern social order based on science and

technology; (4) overcoming the proneness to black-coated professions which has been inherent in the culture of our educated classes and to orientate our educational system to increased productivity; and (5) elimination of such evils as rampant individualism, caste system, etc., and the creation of a new social order based on equality of opportunity and social, political and economic justice. It will readily be agreed that values of this type are of paramount importance in the present situation and have to be placed before the education system as its 'topical' objectives, and suitable programmes have to be devised for their realisation.

The question which we have to pose before ourselves is briefly this: What should be the topical objectives of education in India during the next ten to twenty years and what programmes should we devise in order to achieve them? In particular, what programmes should be taken up from this point of view in the fourth plan? This is an area where so much work is needed but so little has been done so far.

### CONTENT OF EDUCATION

An equally important issue relates to the content of education. We live today in a highly competitive world; and the chances of our survival and ability to make our own contribution to the life of Man depend mainly upon the competence of the men and women we are able to produce, or, in other words, on the content of the education we provide.

The educational process can be conveniently described as consisting of three interrelated programmes; (1) to give knowledge; (2) to build up essential skills; and (3) to develop the right attitudes, interests and values. While all these three programmes are essential for a discussion of the content of education, we shall restrict ourselves only the first, the knowledge content of education, for reasons of convenience. But what we say about it here is obviously applicable, with even greater force, to the other two programmes.

Two significant trends are seen in the advanced countries of the world in educational development. The first is the trend to prolong the duration of education; and the second is the trend to put more content in the same period of schooling. For instance, the duration of compulsory schooling has been increased from six



to eight years or nine years and attempts are being made to increase it still further to 10 or 12 years. At the same time, owing to improvement in teachers, teaching methods and equipment, children are learning more and more within a given span of education. At the end of the eighth year of schooling, for instance, a child today learns things which were normally learnt in the ninth or the tenth year of schooling, 10 or 15 years previously, and this trend is continuously on the increase.

We are not quite sure that this is happening in all parts of India or that it is happening with sufficient speed. An historical study of the development of curricula at the different stages of education in all the States of India would throw very interesting light on this problem. By and large, however, we might say that the content of our education today does not provide adequate challenges, either to the students or to the teachers. At the elementary stage, for instance, there has been considerable improvement in the general education and training of teachers. But the content of elementary education has hardly increased in proportion. At the secondary stage, the mother tongue has been adopted as the medium of instruction. This should have facilitated the assimilation of knowledge very considerably. But it is doubtful whether the upgrading of the curricula of secondary schools has taken adequate note of the implications of this change. Similar observations may also be made at the university stage in respect of all courses, except probably such highly specialised courses as those of Medicine, where not to keep abreast of latest developments means death. By and large, our secondary schools now teach a good deal of what should be taught at the elementary stage and the colleges teach a good deal of what should really be taught at the secondary stage. Indian education would have to be pulled out of this unhappy situation in the next fifteen years.

Dr. D.D. Kothari, Chairman of the University Grants Commission, has suggested that we should plan, not only in quantitative terms of enrolments and duration of courses, but also in the more significant terms of content. As a concrete proposal, he has suggested that, by the end of the Fifth Plan, the standard to be reached at the end of the secondary stage should be equivalent to the present Intermediate and that to be reached at the end of the first degree stage, should be approximately equal to that now reached at the Master's degree. One need not be very

dogmatic about any particular suggestion; but the underlying idea of this suggestion is very clear. The content of education must be continually and consciously deepened. This is an important aspect of the problem which has been neglected totally in all our planning so far and we must introduce it in the educational planning of the future.

It is obvious that such deepening of the content, not only in information but in skills and values, will imply considerable research in curriculum making and in the development of newer and more efficient techniques of teaching and evaluation. It will also imply an improvement of teachers from every point of view and particularly from that of academic competence.

In this connection, a reference may specially be made to the teaching of science. This is one area where our old traditions are the weakest. In ancient India, we evolved a philosophy which shows the highest flights of imagination and provides one of the greatest measures of truth in relation to the fundamental problems of life and death. But we did not develop a scientific tradition and the development of a scientific attitude in our midst was hampered, rather than promoted, by the authoritarian traditions we cultivated. A history of education in the world shows that, at the end of the Middle ages, the conditions in East and West were more or less alike and that it is the development of science that has made the West so different from the East today. Our future development, therefore, lies in the assimilation of science and in the cultivation of a scientific attitude. The elimination of poverty, the disruption of traditions like the caste system and the modernisation of our society entirely depend upon the acceptance of modern science and technology and the building up of scientific attitudes among the public at large.

We have, therefore, to place the highest emphasis on the teaching of science at all stages. The curricula in science will therefore, have to be revised very largely and the revision will have to be kept up almost continuously in view of the latest developments in the scientific world. The preparation of our science teachers will have to be improved in quality and increased in quantity. Scientific talent will have to be identified and provided with adequate opportunity for full development. These are programmes whose value and significance have now been



accepted in principle by all concerned the central and state governments, teachers and the public. What is needed is the evolution of concrete and realistic programmes of action.

#### CULTIVATION OF EXCELLENCE

Another important programme of educational reconstruction in the cultivation of excellence – the provision of the best educational opportunity possible to all talented children. It is this programme which gives a unique distinction to the Soviet system of education and to a greater or lesser degree, it is a feature of the educational system of all the advanced countries.

In India, however, our time has been mostly taken up so far with the basic task of providing minimum educational facilities to as many children as possible and we have not been able to develop a programme for discovery of talent and for its systematic cultivation to the full.

Consequently, the bulk of the talent remains undeveloped at present for several reasons. Since the enrolment at the elementary stage is about 60 per cent of the total population in the age-group 6-14, forty per cent of the talent remains, for all practical purposes, outside the educational system. Even among the children enrolled, only twenty per cent reach class VIII and the talent among the remaining 80 per cent, who drop off on the wayside at different stages, is also unutilised. Large drop-outs occur at the secondary and collegiate stages also. It may, therefore, be said that only a small fraction of the total talent available in the country is now being exposed to educational influences.

The remedial programme is obvious. We have to make an intensive search to discover talent at all stages—elementary, secondary, and university. A far larger programme of scholarships from the middle school to the university has to be created. Measures have to be devised to bring talented students into good schools and under the influence of good teachers and, for that purpose, a continuous attempt has to be made to increase the number of good institutions. Even in the ordinary schools, teachers have to be trained to discover talented students and to help them by providing more difficult curricula and personal guidance. The provision of advanced courses which students can take at various levels, particularly at the end of elementary or

secondary stages, can be a very worthwhile suggestion from this point of view. These programmes have to be taken up, on a fairly large scale, in the fourth and developed still further in the subsequent Plans.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

We shall now turn to the discussion of some of the more important sectors of education and begin with elementary education—an area where the magnitude of the problem is very large but its complexity is comparatively less. There is, for instance, no difference of opinion on the goal to be reached, viz., the provision of free and compulsory education for all children till the age of 14 years. The goal was to have been reached by 1960. But this did not become possible. The Third Plan, therefore, suggested a revised goal, viz., the provision of educational facilities for all children in the age group 6-11 by the end of the third plan and the extension of similar facilities to the age group 11-14 by the end of the fifth Plan. It now appears that even this revised goal will be possible only in the States of Kerala and Madras and in the Union Territory of Delhi. The States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mysore, Punjab and West Bengal, and the remaining Union Territories would be able to provide universal education in the age-group 6-11 by the end of the Fourth Plan (1970-71) and it may be towards the end of the sixth Plan (1980-81) only that they would be in apposition to provide similar educational facilities in the age group 11-14. Conditions are even worse in the six States of Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh which, in this respect, are usually known as the backward or less advanced states. These six states would be able to provide universal education in the age-group 6-11 by the end of the Fifth Plan (1975-76) only and unless radical measures are taken to assist them, they would not be in a position to provide universal education in the age-group 11-14 earlier than the end of the Seventh Plan (1985-86). The provision of a minimum universal education of eight years is absolutely essential in the interest of social justice and stabilisation of democracy. It would, therefore, be suicidal to postpone the realisation of this goal, on which our Constitution has rightly placed the highest emphasis, to the Seventh Plan or beyond. On the other hand, to bring it very near (e.g., end of the

Fourth or Fifth Plan) would be unrealistic; and, in view of the comparatively meager funds likely to be available for educational development as a whole, such a step would distort priorities in other sectors of education. A realistic goal, therefore, would be to enroll all children in the age-group 6-11 and about 75 per cent of the children the age-group 11-14 by the end of the Fifth Plan (1975-76) so that the directive of Article 45 of the Constitution would be fulfilled by the end of the Sixth Plan or 1980-81. It is towards this end that our attempts should now be directed.

The problem of basic education is of great significance in this contest. As early as 1949, basic education was adopted as the national pattern of education at the elementary stage. The country is thus committed to convert all elementary schools to the basic system as quickly as possible. But this programme has not proceeded well. On the one hand, only 21 per cent of the elementary schools would have been converted to the basic system by the end of Third Plan; and on the other hand, a large proportion of even the so-called basic schools are not working satisfactorily. This situation has led to a good deal of controversy in recent months. One group of thinkers concludes that basic education has failed and that the entire experiment should be scrapped. Another group is as firmly convinced as ever that the system of basic education is the answer to the problems of elementary education in India and pleads for a better and more vigorous implementation of the programme. In between, there is a third group which believes that the principles on which the scheme of basic education is founded are intrinsically sound and advocates a substantial modification of the scheme with a view to its universalisation in the fourth and subsequent Plans. Very probably, this would be the direction of future development. A definite decision of policy in this matter is, therefore, needed; and, whatever the decision, it will have to be vigorously implemented during the next 15 years.

There is another point to be noted in this context. We are committed, not only to give free and compulsory education; but also good education, which would make children useful and responsible citizens. During the next three Plans, therefore; the emphasis will have to be placed, not only on the quantitative aspect of this programme but on its qualitative aspect also. For this purpose, we will have to raise the content of elementary

education fairly high. A good deal of the education given in our secondary schools today is really 'elementary', and it was from this point of view that Mahatma Gandhi said that a programme of basic education should reach the Matriculation standard minus English plus craft. We have to stand by this goal, with English added.

The development of elementary education, therefore, presents several problems: (1) provision of educational facilities in small and scattered hamlets; (2) enforcement of compulsory attendance; (3) enrolment of girls and children belonging to the weaker sections of the community, particularly the tribal people; (4) reduction of wastage and stagnation in all classes and particularly in class I where it is particularly heavy; (5) preparation of elementary teachers inclusive of all problems of recruitment, general education, remuneration, service conditions, and professional training (pre- and in-service); (6) improvement in curricula, textbooks, techniques of teaching and evaluation; (7) evolving methods of teaching suited to the management of bigger classes or working under the double-shift system which is being forced on us on financial grounds; (8) modifying basic education and taking all steps necessary to make it a success; (9) improving the administration of education with special reference to the problems of panchayati raj institutions which are being placed in charge of elementary education; and (10) making the school a real and effective centre in the life of the community.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary education has proverbially been the weakest link in Indian education. During the British period, its main objectives were two: (1) preparation of a student for university entrance, and (2) to teach the English language. A few half-hearted measures at diversification of secondary curricula and the introduction of vocational courses which would prepare students for life were made, especially after 1921, but without much success. The position has continued to be substantially the same in the post Independence period also, in spite of the Report of the Mudaliar Commission and all that has been done so far to implement it. In fact, the position today is even worse than what it was in 1947 because of the controversies that have been raised. We do not

seem to agree on any significant issue such as the age of admission to universities, the duration of the secondary course, the utility or otherwise of multipurpose schools and the programmes of vocational education at the secondary stage.

While a very great importance is attached to elementary education in the interests of social justice and as the foundation of the entire superstructure of education, secondary education is really the nation building education. In the next 15 years, therefore, a very high emphasis will have to be placed on the expansion and qualitative improvement of secondary education. On the quantitative side, we will have to increase the duration of the secondary course to four years – the sooner the better. We would also have to provide more facilities for secondary education, particularly in the rural areas and for girls and the weaker sections of the community, and to raise the total enrolment in secondary schools, on a full time or part time basis to about 40 per cent of the age group. We have done very little so far to provide part time secondary education; but this is a programme which is badly needed in our present economic conditions.

It is, however, the qualitative improvement of secondary education which is of even greater significance. This has three aspects : the first is the deepening of the content of secondary education so that, by the end of the Fourth (or the Fifth Plan at the latest), the standard attained at the end of the secondary stage, would be almost equivalent to that of the present Intermediate. This implies better teachers, with post-graduate qualifications and improved professional training; better buildings and equipment – particularly the provision of libraries and laboratories ; and a large provision of scholarships to enable talented but poor students to pursue their studies in secondary schools. It will also imply a selective approach for qualitative improvement under which a given number of secondary schools would be assisted to improve their standards every year.

The second aspect of the qualitative improvement of secondary education relates to the programme of diversification. The basis of the present-day secondary education was laid at a time when the one objective of secondary education was to prepare a student for the university. This still continues to dominate the scene and our secondary schools, still try to fit a boy

to a university and in the process 'almost unfit him for everything else'. We have, therefore, to diversify the secondary course by the introduction of a large number of subjects which will prepare them for life by providing training in some vocation or the other. The most significant recent attempt made in this direction was the establishment of multipurpose schools. This programme has, however, not fared well, particularly in the absence of the right type of teachers. It is, therefore, necessary to evaluate the experiment and modify it to the extent necessary. The Third Plan decided to mark time and to consolidate the existing multipurpose schools before attempting further expansion. But there is an urgent need to evaluate the consolidation (if any) that has taken place and to decide the future line of action in the Fourth and subsequent Plans.

The third aspect of improvement is large scale vocationalisation. The number of students who attend vocational courses at the secondary stage in India is probably the lowest in the world. In West Germany, for instance, about 70 per cent of the students at the secondary stage follow vocational courses which prepare them for life. In Japan, this percentage is about 60. The position in most of the advanced and industrialised countries is the same. But in India, only 12 per cent of the students, enrolled at the second level of education, follow vocational courses. Our programmes of rapid industrialisation are being held up for want of 'middle level' personnel which only the vocational secondary schools can produce. During the next three Plans, therefore, the proportion of students at the second level of education who take to vocational courses will have to be increased to at least 40 per cent. Since the vocational schools are generally costlier to equip and maintain, this programme of vocationalisation has large implications in the preparation of teachers and the provision of funds.

The problem of examination reform looms large at the secondary stage. At the elementary stage, there are no compulsory external examinations. But the School Leaving Certification Examination, held at the end of the secondary stage, presents several problems. It may probably be worthwhile to take courage in both hands and abolish the external examinations at the end of the secondary course just as we have abolished them at the

elementary stage. But this is just not practicable ; and the only realistic programme to be adopted is one of a gradual reform from within. The Evaluation Unit in the National Council of Educational Research and Training is trying to tackle this problem, mainly through the in-service education of teachers. But it has not been able to produce any impact as such on the secondary school leaving examination system. This is very largely an administrative and organisational problem; and it will have to be tackled vigorously in the Fourth and subsequent Plans.

### HIGHER EDUCATION

The main directions in which higher education in India will have to be developed during the next 10-15 years have now been generally recognised, thanks to the very useful work done in this sector by Dr. D. S. Kothari, the Chairman of the University Grants Commission. It is now agreed that, at the university stage, the highest emphasis has to be on the improvement of quality. At this level, there are no State barriers or even international barriers. Our best colleges or university departments have, therefore, to be on a par with their counterparts in any part of the world. This can only be done by selecting institutions where there is a good potential for growth and helping them to reach the highest efficiency possible. It is from this point of view that the University Grants Commission put forward its scheme of 'advanced centres of learning'. This is making good progress in the Third Plan and will have to be developed very largely during the Fourth and subsequent Plans. On the same basis, we shall also have to develop a scheme under which a few individual colleges are selected every year and assisted to improve their standards to as high a level as possible.

Expansion of facilities at the university stage also is badly needed. The enrolment at the university stage at the end of the Second Plan was only 1.8 per cent of the age-group 17-23 and this is expected to rise to only 2.4 per cent of the corresponding age-group at the end of the Third Plan. This is much lower than the standards already reached in the advanced countries of the West. It is, therefore, felt that, by the end of the sixth Plan, the enrolment at the university stage should reach about 10 per cent of the corresponding age-group.

The third proposal of reform is to change the composition of the student body at the university stage very considerably. At present, the possibility of a student availing himself of university education depends more upon the purse of his parents than upon his own talents. Consequently, we have a twofold wastage: a large number of gifted students who ought to be in the universities are not there, due mainly to financial reasons; and, on the other hand, a large number of students who ought not to be there, have been enrolled for the simple reason that they could afford the expenditure involved.

During the next 10-15 years, this picture will have to be considerably changed through a process of selection and scholarships. The talented students will have to be discovered even at the elementary stage and helped to go on to the secondary stage. The best students at the secondary stage would have to be again discovered and assisted, through a liberal programme of scholarships, to proceed on to the degree course; and the best students at the degree course would have to be helped further to go in for the postgraduate or research degrees. Today, only about 15 per cent of the students at the university stage get some form of scholarship aid which is often inadequate. This proportion will have to be substantially increased and, by the end of the Fifth Plan, we will have to provide scholarships to about half the students at the degree level and to about 80 per cent of the students at the postgraduate level so that the most talented group of students in the country, irrespective of caste, sex or religion, is admitted to the privilege of higher education.

During the next 10-15 years, special emphasis would also have to be laid on the maintenance of the highest standards combined with very rapid expansion, at the post graduate stage. Our expansion of collegiate and secondary education is now so rapid, in comparison with that at the postgraduate stage, that it is becoming almost impossible to get good teachers for secondary schools and colleges, even by raising the salaries to an appreciable extent. In many places, second-class degree holders are appointed to posts where a first-class degree is essential; and when even second-class degree holders are not available, third-class degree holders are perforce selected. Consequently, the standards at the collegiate level are going down and this, in its turn, is affecting the standards in secondary schools. It is therefore, realised that

the key to qualitative improvement of education is a very large expansion of postgraduate stage simultaneously with an improvement in its standards. It is only this measure which will provide us the teachers with whose assistance we can expand collegiate and secondary education, without diluting quality, on the scale that is contemplated at present. The significance of this programme is, therefore, obvious and, as it is the first step in the whole series, it will have to be taken up on a very large scale in the Fourth Plan itself.

One of the most controversial issues in university education at present refers to the medium of instruction. In the past, the use of English as a medium of instruction did not create major problems at the university stage because there was a great emphasis on the teaching of English at the secondary stage and the students came to the university with a fairly good command over the language. Since 1947, the emphasis on the teaching of English at the secondary stage has been reduced very considerably with the result that the average student, who now enters the university, is not in a position to follow the lectures in English or to read English books with fluency and pleasure. The natural consequence of this policy at the secondary stage would, therefore, be to adopt the modern Indian languages as media of instruction the university stage also. Steps towards this end are being taken and a number of universities have permitted the teaching of certain subjects in the modern Indian languages and have also allowed students to answer examination papers in their mother tongue. But progress is slow for want of a suitable terminology and textbooks in the Indian languages.

It is inevitable that, sooner or later, the regional languages will have to be adopted as a media of instruction at the university stage and it may, therefore, be desirable to prepare an intensive and phased programme for the change over and to plan to reach this goal, by and large, by 1981. During the next 15 years, therefore, the greatest emphasis would have to be laid on the production of an adequate number of textbooks and other standard works in all the modern Indian languages so that the standards at the university stage would not deteriorate. This would be an immense programme of action which would need both talent and money.

As the regional languages gradually become the media of instruction in the Indian universities and are simultaneously

adopted in the administration of the states concerned, the problem of a link language a common language in which Indians from different parts of the country could communicate with each other would arise obviously the first link language would be Hindi which has been declared to be the official language of the Indian Union. During the next fifteen years, intensive steps would have to be taken to develop Hindi on the lines which have been initiated in the first three Plans and it would have to be given its due status as the official language. At the same time, efforts would have to be intensified to popularise Hindi in the non-Hindi speaking states.

But India also needs another link-language-English-which would provide it, not only with a common channel of communication amongst Indians, but also with a 'window on the world'. Without a good knowledge of English, attainment of high standards at the university stage is not at all possible. English has also become a world language and a good knowledge of English is essential for every educated Indian. Steps will, therefore, have to be taken to intensively cultivate the study of English also. At present, there are various practices to teach English at the school stage. These will have to be examined on the basis of sound research and a good system of teaching English at the school stage would have to be devised. At the university stage also, an intensive study of English as a language would have to be made compulsory. Most important of all, adequate provision would have to be made to create 'nurseries' for preparing the necessary number of teachers of English literature in colleges and of English language in schools and colleges. For this purpose, we will have to encourage and maintain some schools which would begin the teaching of English very early and also establish training institutions where a four year course in the English language is integrated with elements of pedagogy.

There is another point which deserves notice. In the interest of national integration, it is necessary to have an elite which would come from all parts of country but which would be educated in common educational institutions. One good proposal to this end would be to establish national universities which would adopt Hindi and English as media of instruction. In universities where English is the medium of instruction, the study of Hindi should be compulsory and vice versa. These universities should all be

financed by the central government and should maintain the highest standards possible. They should provide scholarships to most of their students who should be selected on a competitive basis from all parts of the country, a quota on population basis being allocated to each state. A beginning may be made with a few national universities. But ultimately, there should be a national university in every state. A part from producing an elite which would bind the whole country together, these universities would also spur the other universities on to ever-increasing heights of excellence.

Research is one of the most important functions of the universities and development of research in education, humanities, science and technology should be one of the highest priorities during the next 15 years. In India, very little expenditure is incurred on this sector at present. It is, however, well to remember that the future development of education, culture and industry in the country depends very largely on the quality and quantity of the research that we would be able to develop in our universities and other research that we would be able to develop in our universities and other research institutions.

#### SOCIAL EDUCATION

One of the greatest weaknesses in the first three Plans has been the neglect of social education. Prior to 1947, the general thinking was that intensive efforts to liquidate illiteracy and to educate the masses on proper lines would be undertaken in the post independence period. But, by and large, these hopes did not materialise. A few attempts to organise mass literacy campaigns were made, particularly in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, but these did not last long enough nor did they spread to other areas. Neither government nor the voluntary organisations devoted themselves earnestly to the task of organising mass campaigns for literacy. A new and a useful concept of social education (which included literacy and went much beyond) was evolved; but it was not possible to expand the programme of social education also. These deficiencies would have to be made up during the next 10-15 years and social education (including the liquidation of adult illiteracy) would have to be given a very high priority.

The problem of mass education is essentially one of motivation and organisation. Massive campaigns of liquidating

illiteracy can be successful only if two conditions are satisfied. The first is the generation of a strong mass enthusiasm for a better life, through intensive and nationwide programmes of extension education. Such programmes would create a mass thirst for literacy. The second condition, therefore, is the creation of an adequate machinery and satisfactory techniques to satisfy this mass thirst when it is once generated. The experience of countries like USSR which has liquidated its illiteracy in a short time could be of very good use of us in this endeavour.

The programmes of social education have also to be developed. The most important group of population on which such a programme should make an impact is that of rural adults, most of whom are agriculturists. It is on the vitalisation of this group that the future of development of the economy very largely depends. But it is this group which has been neglected so far and on which even the community development programme has failed to make an adequate impact. The social education movement must address itself mainly to this group during the next 10-15 years. It should deal with a number of vital problems, such as national integration, development of new scientific attitudes, family planning, increasing production, improvement of agriculture, development of rural industries, health and nutrition, care of mothers and children, understanding the implications of development, developing attitudes of hard work, restricting consumption, and understanding responsibilities and duties of a citizen. The more concrete and vital this programme is, the more effective would the movement be.

#### OTHER PROGRAMMES

Pre-primary education is another neglected area. What is needed here is a scientific study of our pre school children; the evolution of a good course of preschool education the situation is rather chaotic today because a number of schemes and programmes are simultaneously in operation, i.e., the montessori, kindergarten, nursery or pre-basic and all sorts of combinations of these systems, the training of pre-primary teachers; the evolution of a simple programme of pre-primary education which would suit rural areas and which could be organised through local women whose educational attainments are not high; and the organisation



of preprimary schools on a large scale – the enrolment of 10-15 per cent of the children in the age group 3-6 being a good target to be reached by the end of the Sixth Plan.

A similarly neglected area is the education of the handicapped children. The present facilities available are far too meager. A good target to be reached by 1981 would be to establish one school of a fair size for the blind and the deaf in each district and the provision of one school for the orthopaedically and mentally handicapped in conjunction with each medical school or college. Experiments will also have to be made to educate handicapped children in ordinary schools by providing some special facilities – an experiment which obviously has a great future by reason of the reduction of costs it secures.

The education of the backward classes, particularly the tribals, poses several difficult problems, such as, study of tribal cultures or preparation of textbooks and instruction of teachers in tribal languages. The nomadic and erstwhile criminal tribes pose another group of difficult problems.

#### TEACHERS

We may now turn to the problems of personnel which would have to be tackled in the next 10-15 years, and especially in the Fourth Five Year Plan. These cover mainly the teachers and the administrators.

In respect of teachers, a number of problems need attention. The first and the foremost is the question of their scales of pay. During the last three Plans, the salaries of teachers in universities have been improved considerably and one may even say, satisfactorily. But the problem of teachers in the affiliated colleges – and these form the vast majority of teachers at the university stage is yet far from being solved. At the secondary stage, salaries leave much to be desired and the problem is still worse at the elementary stage. It is essential to take a comprehensive view of the problem and to revise the scales of pay of teachers at all levels in accordance with some broad principles among which two are most important: (1) There should be as little gap as possible (or preferably no gap at all) between the remuneration offered to teachers and the persons with similar qualifications and responsibilities in other walks of life; and (2) the trend should be

to raise the salaries at lower levels to a greater extent so that the existing wide gap between teachers of different levels tends to be bridged. A high level national committee may have to be appointed to examine this issue.

The teachers have demanded that there should be uniform scales of pay for the country as a whole. It may not be possible to meet this demand and scales of pay will continue to vary from state to state. We should, however, take steps to see that the salaries of teachers will not fall below prescribed levels in any state and that, within the same state, there should be no variation of salaries according to managements and that all teachers of a given category would draw the same scale of pay irrespective of the agency under which they happen to serve—central government, state governments, local bodies or private organisations. At present, there are wide variations, even within a state, in the scales of pay given to a category of teachers under different managements. This position will have to be righted as soon as practicable.

In particular, special attention has to be paid to the problem of equalising the dearness allowance paid to teachers working under different categories. In some states, the dearness allowance payable to a category of teachers remains constant, irrespective of the management under which they happen to work. In others, the dearness allowance varies considerably from management to management. For instance, the primary teachers working under local bodies in Bihar get a dearness allowance which is less by about Rs. 20 p.m. than that paid to government servants drawing the same salary. This is a very invidious discrimination and should be ended as early as possible.

The problem of the old-age provision of teachers is not yet satisfactorily solved. The ideal solution would be for all teachers to get the same type of old-age provision, irrespective of the management under which they might happen to serve. Even if this is not possible, the minimum we should expect is that every teacher, serving under any management whatsoever, should be entitled at least to the triple benefit scheme under which he would draw pension at a certain rate, subscribe to a contributory provident fund and also have his life insured for a specific sum. Such a provision has been made for all teachers in some states,

for example, Madras. It is necessary to extend the scheme to teachers in other States also. It is the teachers under private organisations who have the poorest provision for old age. It is necessary to extend the benefits of such a scheme to them at an early date.

The concept of welfare services for teachers has not yet been developed so far. It would be essential to take up this idea during the next three Plans and particularly in the Fourth Plan. Under this proposal, welfare services would be provided for teachers and cover such matters as health or accident insurance, assistance for education of children, travel grants, etc. The total funds required for the programme may be raised on a contributory basis – the teachers contributing an amount of about one and half to two percent of their salaries and government contributing an equal amount. The total funds so available should be administered on a district basis through committees consisting of the representatives of teachers and of the education department. The professional organisations of teachers would be particularly useful in establishing and running these welfare services. This is a very important programme which should be begun with the Fourth Plan and developed fully in the Fourth and the Fifth Plans.

Adequate provision is also necessary for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers. At the pre-service stage, we need expansion of existing facilities and improvement in quality. At the in-service stage, we have hardly any programme worth the name at present, although it is in-service training that gives the best results in qualitative improvement. It is, therefore, necessary to provide regular in-service training for all teachers on such a basis that every teacher would get about three months' in-service training in every five years of service. A fairly large beginning in this direction should be made in the Fourth Five Year Plan and the programme completed in the Fifth and the Sixth Plans.

There is very little literature on educational subjects in the modern Indian languages. This prevents the teachers, who do not know English, from improving their professional competence. Steps have, therefore, to be taken to produce this literature in all the modern Indian languages as soon as possible. The best talent in the nation should be harnessed for writing books on different aspects of educational problems and these should then be published in all the Indian languages. A fairly large programme

to this end will have to be taken up in the Fourth Plan and developed extensively through the National Council of Educational Research and Training at the Centre and the Institutes of Education in the states.

A teacher is always a learner in the first instance. We have already referred to the programmes of in-service training and production of educational literature which would have to be developed to stimulate and keep up his learning. In addition, steps would have to be taken to provide facilities and incentives to teachers to improve their subject knowledge and professional competence continuously. The provision of correspondence courses, grant of study leave, grant of increments for attaining higher levels of competence, etc., will have to be made. Concrete proposals for the implementation of these programmes would have to be devised in the Fourth Plan.

The organisations of teachers are not functioning very satisfactorily at present. They mainly concentrate on the economic aspect of the profession, namely, improvement in remuneration and service conditions. While this is legitimate, it is also desirable that these associations should be induced and assisted to organise programmes for improving the professional competence of teachers. All improvement is self-improvement, and the best incentives for professional improvement are provided when these programmes are organised by or through teachers' associations.

#### EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS

With regard to educational administrators the first problem is that of increasing the strength—and this has been referred to earlier. The other main problem to be tackled is that of training-pre-service and in-service.

Courses in educational administration are now provided, as a part of the M. Ed. Degree course, in a number of universities. But there are two major problems. The content of these courses needs improvement. Educational administration cannot be separated from general administration and personnel management; but adequate provision for these courses is hardly made at present. There is also no adequate provision for practical training. The quality of training also leaves a good deal to be desired, especially because the staff does not often have practical



experience of educational administration. Devising more meaningful and intensive courses of pre-service training for educational administrators are, therefore, very urgently needed.

Even more important is the problem of in-service training of educational administrators. There is hardly any provision for this at present. A beginning is proposed to be made with the state institutes of education. These would have to be developed fully to perform this difficult task in the fourth Plan.

There is hardly any research conducted at present in problems of educational administration. Unsatisfactory as our planning is, its implementation is even more defective. The improvement of administrative practices is, therefore, very essential. In this connection, the experience of USA would be of great value to us. Since there were 48 states in USA, each with its own form of educational administration, the first step taken was to make comparative studies of administrative practices in the different states. These studies naturally led to a discussion of their similarities and dissimilarities and their advantages and disadvantages. Where necessary, detailed studies were also undertaken to examine the strength and weakness of a given practice and to ascertain the manner in which it could be improved. It is out of such discussions and researches that the science of educational administration was gradually built up. A similar development should and can be made to take place in India also.

#### FINANCE

In the First Plan, the total outlay on general education was Rs.1,330 million. It increased to Rs.2,080 million in the Second Plan and to Rs.4,180 million in the Third Plan. It must be pointed out, however, that the proportion of the outlay on general education to total outlay on all sectors has remained fairly constant, at about 6-7 per cent, in all the three Plans and that the larger amounts provided are merely the result of an increase in the size of the Plan as a whole. Moreover, even at the end of the Second Plan, we were spending only about 2-3 per cent of our national income on education. This may increase to about 3 per cent at the most by the end of the Third Plan.

Two changes are needed in the policies pursued in the first three Plans. The first is to accord a high priority to educational development which would imply an allocation of more than 7 per cent in the total Plan. The second is to make a definite attempt to increase the total expenditure on education. Japan, it may be pointed out, spends about 6 per cent of its national income on education. USA and UK spend about 4 to 5 per cent. UNESCO has suggested that the developing countries should increase their expenditure on education to at least 4 per cent of their national income as early as possible and that they should increase it to about 6 per cent in a phased programme spread over 10-15 years. In so far as India is concerned, we should make an attempt to increase our educational expenditure to at least 4 per cent of the national income by the end of the Fourth Plan. In a further period of ten years, it may be increased to about 6 per cent.

Two other important problems have to be faced in the financing of education. The first is the problem of priorities. In the first three Plans, we have tried to do something of everything and spread the available resources very thinly over a large area. We should seriously examine whether this policy should be continued. It might be better, in the Fourth and subsequent Plans, to highlight a few programmes of the utmost significance and to develop them fully, leaving the others to private and community enterprise of the people themselves. Unfortunately, very little thinking has been done in India so far on this problem of priorities.

The second problem is that of supplementing the public support for education. This may be done in several different ways as indicated below:

- 1) The local communities, through powers of increasing local taxation on land and buildings, can make a much larger contribution to the development of elementary education than they do at present. Any increase in the land taxes at the state level has become politically inconvenient and impossible. Probably, these sources could be exploited better at the local level, if the additional resources could be earmarked for local benefits such as those in the field of elementary education.

- 2) We should develop a *school improvement programme* on the lines of the Madras state. Here, an intensive effort is made to take the elementary schools closer to the people and to seek assistance from the public for such programmes as construction of buildings, provision of equipment and ancillary services like school meals. So far, Madras has collected about Rs. 550 million through private contributions for the improvement of elementary education. Programmes of this type should be organised in all parts of the country in the Fourth Plan; and the preparatory work for them should be done in the remaining two years of the Third Plan.
- 3) At the university stage, we should have a scheme of loan scholarships only. The university students would start earning in three or four years and there is no reason why they should not get a loan scholarship and pay for their own higher education.

This proposal needs some elaboration. In this context, it is suggested that we should establish a National Scholarships Corporation of India on the lines of the LIC Corporation. Every student, who get more than a prescribed percentage of marks in the examination of the secondary school (or in his B.A. or M.A. examination) should be entitled to get a loan scholarship for higher studies. The amount of the scholarship should be adequate to meet his expenses. This loan should be repaid by him in 15 yearly instalments which would begin one year after he gets employment and starts earning, and there should be a statutory provision for collection of instalments, through deduction of his salary, on the lines of the Income Tax Act. The amount of repayment should be proportionate to his income. In other words, those who get less than a certain income (say, Rs.150) would not repay it at all. Others would repay it at a certain percentage of their monthly salary; the rate of repaying, rising with an increase in salary. No student, however, should be required to pay more than twice the amount that he has borrowed.

On actuarial basis, it may be possible to decide the contribution of each person for the repayment of this loan on the basis of his annual or monthly earnings after employment. In short, what is proposed here is an inverted educational insurance

policy. A prudent father nowadays takes out an educational insurance policy for his child as soon as he is born. He pays the prescribed premia for 15 years and finds that he has, at his disposal, a sum which would enable him to give a college education to his child as soon as he attains the age of 16. What is proposed here is exactly the same. But instead of making the parent take the educational insurance policy, it is suggested that the student himself should be made responsible to take it out in an inverted fashion, that is to say, the payments of the policy should be made in the first three to six years and the premia for it should be recovered in the succeeding 15 years.

It is suggested that, right from now, serious thinking should be undertaken on two lines: (1) raising of the maximum resources possible in the public sector by according a higher priority to education than it has received in the first three Plans; and (2) devising ways and means to supplement the public sector resources through contributions of local bodies, local communities and the parents. It is only this combined approach that would help us to go the longest way.

#### CENTRE-STATE RELATIONSHIP

If all this large-scale and qualitative development of education is to be attempted in the next three Plans, two fundamental issues arise. The first refers to the relationship between the centre and the states. Under the Constitutional provisions as they stand at present, education is essentially a responsibility of the state, and the centre has gone much beyond its Constitutional role and a working partnership has been evolved between the centre and the states in the last three Plans. The present position is, however, extremely anomalous. In the first place, it does not give adequate initiative and authority to the centre. Secondly, the state governments are in a very unfavourable position to take a long-term view of educational development because they are subject to immediate pressures from several quarters. It would, therefore, be essential to review the centre-state relationship in education and to make education a concurrent subject.

The second issue relates to central grant-in-aid. At present, the central sector in education is extremely small. The centrally sponsored sector (i.e., the sector where funds are provided by the

centre but implementation is done by the States in accordance with a commonly evolved policy) was fairly large till the end of the Second Plan. But it has now been reduced to the minimum in the Third Plan and experience has shown that this has been a very unfortunate decision. The state sector is the largest and is assisted by the centre to a substantial extent. But owing to the weakness in the Constitutional position, the Centre does not even come to know how its grants are being actually utilised in practice until it is too late and it is also totally helpless to take any remedial measures even in cases where a misuse or a misdirection has come to its notice. Moreover, the central grants are now given for 'developmental' expenditure only and the entire committed expenditure is the responsibility of the states. This system is defective to a very large extent and, if educational development is to be stepped up, steps will have to be taken to provide central grants for educational expenditure as a whole—both committed and developmental. Under the present conditions, the expanding and elastic resources are mostly vested in the centre. Education, which is a state responsibility, cannot make any headway unless ever-increasing and large financial allocations are given. It follows, therefore, that a long-term educational development of the type contemplated here is possible only if the system of grant-in-aid from the centre to the states is completely recast and the central and the centrally-sponsored sectors in education are substantially expanded.

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## 8

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### To Discuss the Implementation of the National Policy on Education (1968)\*

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Adviser, Ministry of Education, initiated the discussion. He said:

I am not concerned so much over the reduction in allocations as over the unconcern for education that is generally noticeable everywhere. It looks as if the country lacks the will to plan for educational development. One of the most disappointing documents recently produced was the report of the Committee on Priorities. Contrary to expectations, there is no reference in the report to the place of education, except to say that the allocation to 'social welfare' and education, could be reduced. Two factors are essential for developing education: the will and the resources. In other words, human effort and monetary investment are both required. People talk of realism in accepting the reduced allocations. What is realism? It may be called realistic to say and accept that education is to receive, say, Rs. 800 crore. But the situation in the country is such that if a big effort is not made to develop education in the next five to ten years, no aspect of national life will be developed and the future of the country will be damaged for all time to come. To accept this fact and to allocate additional resources to education here and now may also be realism.

The first three Plans can be summed up thus. The Planning Commission says to the educator: "What is the minimum amount with which you can plan or unplan education?" To this, the educator replies: "If you give me so much I will tell you how to

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\*Proceedings of the 34th session, October 11-12, 1968

utilise the amount wastefully." It does not help to talk in terms of rupees. It is for this august body to suggest some educational programmes which will enthuse the country.

Once the programmes are clear before us, then the necessary resources — material and human — will have to be found for them. Let us identify a few programmes of high priority and implement them with enthusiasm and in a big way. This body should suggest a small but feasible and constructive programme of educational development which can be undertaken and implemented in the Fourth Plan. Then the N.D.C. should be requested to give this programme priority and allocate the necessary resources.

It is also necessary for this Board to take a decision about the centrally-sponsored sector. It is wrong decision to cut down this sector, especially because education is given the lowest priority in the state sector. Up to the Third Plan, education in the state sector received about ten per cent of the total outlay. But now, except for West Bengal where education receives over 16 per cent, other states have allocated only 5 to 7 per cent to education. This Board may, therefore, appeal to the N.D.C. to continue the centrally-sponsored sector so that important schemes might be saved. In the alternative, earmarked funds should be given to states, during the next five years, for important schemes that would have been transferred to the states.

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### Educational Administration in Urban Areas (1968)\*

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Not all urban local authorities in India are entrusted with responsibilities for education. We have two distinct traditions in respect of the association of local authorities—whether urban or rural—with education. The first, initiated by Lord Rippon, began in the erstwhile British Indian provinces. It made primary education the obligatory responsibility of all municipal authorities and enabled them to undertake, in their discretion, other educational responsibilities as well. Consequently, several municipalities in the areas of the erstwhile British Indian provinces are now responsible for establishment and maintenance of primary schools and some of them also conduct adult education programmes, secondary schools, colleges, libraries and museums. On the other hand, the erstwhile princely states did not generally entrust local authorities with any educational responsibility so that the municipalities in their areas, in spite of their wealth and capacity, are hardly doing anything for education. The existing position, therefore, presents a marked contrast.

Municipalities in some states like UP, Bihar or Madras contribute a good deal to the maintenance of primary schools in their areas and have undertaken several other educational responsibilities upon themselves. On the other hand, municipalities in States like Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh or Kerala have hardly undertaken any educational activity. Some time, the position varies from region to region even within a state. In Maharashtra, for instance, the municipalities in Western

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\*\*Proceedings of the 34th session, October 11-12, 1968

Maharashtra region and Vidarbha, which formed part of the erstwhile British Indian provinces of Bombay and C.P., undertake extensive educational responsibilities. But they do not do so in the Marathwada region which was formerly included in the erstwhile princely state of Hyderabad.

The first problem which needs discussion in this context, therefore, refers to the desirability or otherwise of the association of urban local authorities with the administration of education in their areas. The arguments in favour of such association are strong and convincing. The urban areas in which talent and wealth are being concentrated more and more have to play their legitimate role in the promotion of education and their close association with the administration of education in their areas helps to accelerate development and tap new sources for educational support. The experience of such association, which is now about a century old, has on the whole been good and certain deficiencies it has shown in some areas are neither serious nor insurmountable. All this creates a good case in favour of entrusting all urban local authorities with some responsibilities for education.

The proposal is sometimes opposed by two groups. The first is that of the urban people and the municipalities themselves. They do not like to tax themselves and as government now provides them with all the schools they need these are even better than those in rural areas without being required to make any special local contribution, they naturally refuse to be coaxed into buying some power at the cost of shouldering a large and increasing financial burden. The second group which oppose the proposal is that of teachers who are often harassed under small local administrations and who always prefer to be the servants of the state, or better still, of the central government. But neither of these groups has any strong argument on its side. There is no reason why the rich urban areas should not make their due contribution to the support of education; and if this is made obligatory, irrespective of the fact whether the urban local authorities administer education or not, their opposition to being entrusted with some educational responsibilities will disappear. It is true that the grievances of teachers are, in many instances, right. But instead of encouraging their escapist attitude, it will be more fruitful to devise ways and means to ensure that they are

not subjected to any harassment. Experience has shown that this is possible and that service under urban local authorities can be made even more attractive to teachers than that under government. This can be especially so for women teachers who like to remain in towns and dread being transferred to rural areas.

## II

What form should this association take? That is the second problem which needs discussion. This has two aspects: scope and manner of association.

Regarding the scope of such association, it may be desirable to universalise the practice which now prevails only in the erstwhile areas of the British Indian provinces and which has stood the test of time and experience, namely, to make the establishment and maintenance of primary schools an obligatory duty of all urban local authorities and to make it their discretionary duty to undertake any other educational activities of their choice. Naturally, the development of discretionary programmes of the municipalities will depend upon their resources. The majority of municipalities may not be able to do anything beyond primary education. But some will take up programmes of adult or secondary education and a big municipality like the Corporation of Bombay may even maintain medical colleges as it does at present.

The manner of association of municipalities with the administration of primary education in their areas is a more complicated problem. Such association will obviously depend upon the size, resources and competence of the municipalities and these show immense variations. In the light of past experience in India and practices prevailing in Western democracies, however, the following two principles can be suggested for guidance in this regard:

- 1) It is only the bigger municipalities which should be authorised to administer primary education in the full sense, namely, to have all authority regarding the establishment and maintenance of primary schools and the appointment of primary teachers. If this authority is to be properly exercised, the minimum essential requirement is that it should be possible to appoint a competent Education

Officer to look after the primary schools. This will be possible only in the big municipalities which have a population of about one lakh or more. The bigger municipalities incorporated in cities with a population of ten lakhs or more, may even be entrusted with powers of supervision. The authority regarding curricula and textbooks has, however, to be retained with the state government because of the large scale and continuous migration between urban and rural areas.

- (2) In the areas of smaller municipalities which cannot appoint a competent officer to look after their primary schools, the authority to appoint primary teachers and to supervise and inspect primary schools should be vested in the state government and carried out through appropriate officers. But all non-teacher matters, such as establishment of schools, construction and maintenance of buildings, provision of equipment, enforcement of compulsory attendance, etc. should be entrusted to the municipalities and should be discharged through a statutory committee on education. Such an arrangement will save teachers from the harassment which generally becomes pronounced in small towns and, at the same time, bring in local interest, enthusiasm and support to be upon the improvement of primary education.

In short, the municipalities may be divided into three groups. Group 'A', which should include the corporations and municipalities in cities with a population of 10 lakhs or more, may be entrusted with all authority over primary education, including supervision and inspection, appointment of teachers and establishment and maintenance of primary schools. Group 'B' should include municipalities with a population between one lakh and 10 lakhs and should be entrusted with all the above mentioned authority except inspection and supervision which should continue to vest in the state government. The municipalities in this group should also be required to appoint a competent officer to look after the primary schools—he should preferably be an officer of the State Education Department seconded to work under the municipality. Group 'C' will include the smaller municipalities and should be entrusted with all non-teacher matters relating to primary schools in their areas.<sup>1</sup>

### III

We can now discuss some major problems of educational administration in urban areas.

The basic issue in educational administration in India today is to change its character from a 'maintenance administration' into a 'developmental administration'. The educational administrators have to be converted from a body of men who deal mainly with statistics, financial sanctions, grants-in-aid, transfer and appointments, and enquiries into all sorts of complaints, into an organisation of educationists who should be imaginative enough to realise the goals of educational reconstruction, sensitive enough to know the needs and demands of the people, competent enough to plan satisfactory programmes of educational reconstruction and to implement them with success, and able enough to function as the friends, philosophers and guides of teachers who, in their turn, should extend a similar service to parents and students. But this is a basic problem which affects all educational administration and need not be discussed here. What we shall examine in some detail are a few problems which are peculiar to the administration of education in urban areas.

These special problems will become clear if we compare educational administration in rural areas with that in urban areas. To begin with, the urban educational administration has a number of assets. It is able to attract and retain good teachers. It can also attract and retain a comparatively large number of women teachers who are specially good at the primary stage. In the city of Bombay, for instance, women teachers form about two-thirds of the total cadre of primary teachers. Since the numbers are large, it is also possible to provide separate schools for boys and girls, although the demand for such schools is less in urban areas than in the villages. Difficult problems like single-teachers schools where one teacher has to teach five classes simultaneously do not also arise in urban areas, except to a very limited extent in the case of linguistic minorities. The parents are generally more education-conscious so that the attendance of children is better and more regular and greater attention is paid to their studies at home than in the villages. On the other hand, the urban areas have some special difficulties and disadvantages also. For instance, it is very difficult to provide adequate playgrounds for schools in urban

areas. In many schools, a playground just does not exist and cannot be provided. It is also difficult to provide adequate buildings; and a large number of urban areas have to use their buildings for two and sometimes even three shifts. These difficulties about buildings and playgrounds accentuate as the population increases. The costs of education in urban areas are generally higher than in the rural areas. The rates of truancy and delinquency in these slums are very high and they create what may be called the worst educational problems which any administration has to face and which are far more complex and difficult than problems of rural education.

Another group of problems arises from the co-existence of: (1) Public primary schools which are conducted by government or municipalities, which are free but maintain comparatively poor standards, and which are generally resorted to by the poorer classes of society; and (2) the private schools which generally charge fees, maintain comparatively good standards, and are attended by children of the rich and the well-to-do. There is thus a segregation in primary education which tends to accentuate and perpetuate class differences. This phenomenon hardly exists in rural areas where, in most cases, there is only one school maintained by government or a local authority. How to prevent this segregation without infringing on the fundamental rights of the citizens or the canons of good education is a major problem which primary education in all urban areas has to face.

Yet another problem of education in urban areas is, paradoxically enough, the isolation of the average public primary school from its community—an isolation which increases as the size of the town or city becomes larger. In the rural areas, there is generally some contact between the primary school and its immediate community, and if this contact is weak, it is mainly due to the illiteracy of the average parent. In the towns and cities, there is a concentration of educated persons and the average parent is far better equipped to take interest in and guide the development of the primary school in his locality than the corresponding person in a rural society. And yet, the character of urban life is such that the educated parent has very little contact, formal or informal, with the primary school of his neighbourhood, especially because his own children are often educated in the separate system of private schools. In fact, in most big cities and towns, the isolation

of the publicly-managed primary school from its neighbourhood community is so complete that the two live almost in two different worlds which never meet. This is a great loss to education and a major problem in all urban educational administration is to devise ways and means of bringing together each such primary school into as close a contact with its neighbourhood community as possible.

#### IV

What measures can we adopt to solve these and other allied problems of education in urban areas? Let us first take the problem of buildings and playgrounds. In the congested parts of cities, it is next to impossible to get adequate space for playgrounds and the only way to provide them to children is to convert streets into play-grounds for specified periods in a day. In fact, children do use the streets as playgrounds with great hazard to themselves and to the traffic. What is required is a system under which particular roads, say roads in front of schools should be blocked for traffic for specified periods with policemen in attendance so that the children can use the streets freely for purposes of playgrounds. This is done, for instance, in many areas of the city of London; and given a careful organisation, there is no reason why it cannot be done in cities like Bombay and Calcutta. Delhi and Madras are in many respects, more fortunately placed with regard to buildings and playgrounds. In smaller towns and cities, this problem is not so very acute.

The school has to undertake residual responsibilities and try to remedy deficiencies at home. In congested cities and towns, most people live in small one or two room tenements so that their children generally do not have an appropriate atmosphere for study at home. The adolescents attending secondary schools are not inconvenienced from this point of view. The school can come to their assistance in two ways. The first is to design the school buildings in such a way that they can be used as classrooms during the day and as dormitories at night. I have seen such designs where folding beds are put up in a two-or three-tier system in the walls as in railway sleeping coaches. These can be conveniently folded up so that they disappear into the walls during the day while they are extremely convenient at night. Such buildings can



be used by a large number of students for dormitory purposes with great improvement in their studies and health.

Similarly, I have seen a number of urban schools in Bombay converting themselves into camps for students during vacations. Very few parents can afford to send their children out of the city during vacations; and with very crowded homes, the conditions of these children, especially of the adolescents, becomes worse in the vacations because they do not have even the schools to go to. What these schools do, therefore is to convert their buildings and playgrounds into students' camps in vacations. Students from the neighbourhood come to spend the whole of their day there and are fruitfully engaged in programmes of self-study, recreation, and a little individual coaching by teachers who remain on duty and are given a small honorarium for the purpose. The students generally go home for their meals so that no large expenses are involved. But they spend most of their time in the school premises and feel greatly refreshed and improved at the end of the vacation. I do not see why such use of schools buildings cannot be made universal in all the big towns and cities. This will be a great relief to children from lower middle class homes and almost a boon to those from the slums.

One point needs mention. Although it is difficult to provide buildings and playgrounds on an adequate scale in the congested parts of the cities and towns, it would be comparatively easy to do so in the new extensions that are growing up continually in all urban areas. Unfortunately, the planning of towns is not properly done; and even in new areas being brought under development, no adequate provision is often made for school buildings and playgrounds. Such errors should be avoided; and in all development plans of towns and cities, due care should be taken to see that reservations for educational purposes are adequately provided for.

## V

The problem of segregation of social classes which takes plan because of the co-existence of qualitatively poor but free schools under public management and qualitatively good but fee-charging schools under private management is more difficult to handle. Some hold the view that no private schools should be

permitted at the primary stage and that all parents should be required by law to send their children to the schools in their neighbourhood. This may be an ideal solution. But it is not permissible within the Constitution and it also offends the parents' fundamental right to choose the school for his child a right which is respected in all democracies. The problem therefore, will have to be approached from a different point of view and the following steps may be taken:

- 1) An intensive programme should be prepared for improvement of the primary schools under public management so that parents would have less objection to send their children to them. Over a period of time, schools under public management should be so improved that the problem of segregation will be reduced to marginal proportions.
- 2) Private schools charging fees may be allowed to — — — they should be required, as a condition of recognition, to admit a certain proportion of free students, generally between 30-50 per cent. This will put an end to segregation which now takes place in these schools. The schools may also be compensated to some extent for the children thus admitted free, the local authority being required to pay a grant-in-aid on their account which would be broadly equal to the expenditure which that authority would have incurred on their education if they had chosen to seek admission in publicly managed schools.

## VI

The problem of breaking the isolation of the publicly-managed urban schools from its community is even more important. The minimum that can and should be done without delay is to set up a committee for each such school, consisting of nominated members who live in the neighbourhood, are not active members of any political party, and are interested in education. The committee should be given specific powers and responsibilities and some funds should be placed at its disposal, with freedom to add to them by local collections. Not all committees need be given the same powers and duties. Certain minimum responsibilities should be vested in every committee; and additional powers may be given (or withdrawn) according to



performance and potential. A more daring step would be to constitute, as in Malaysia, Boards of Governors, for each school. The teachers are then made the servants of the Board and become non-transferable. A great bane of public services of teachers is that they remain loyal to the cadre and fail to develop loyalty to individual institutions which is an essential condition for improving quality. A system of self-governing schools, each with its Board of Management properly constituted from the neighbourhood, will overcome this weakness. It will also get rid of the problem of 'transfer' which is often a great source of harassment to teachers. What is even more important, it will fully utilise the reservoir of talent and interest which is readily available in urban areas for purposes of educational development.

## VII

Some other problems may also be noted in passing. In all urban areas, a large number of pre-primary schools have grown up in response to a social demand from working mothers from the middle classes. These are all unrecognised and some of them are run under conditions which are even harmful to children. Some regulation of this private activity seems to be called for. Similar regulation is also needed for the evil of private tuitions, coaching classes and other commercial enterprises which is ever on the increase in all urban centres.

The urban areas also provide excellent opportunities for integrating, in a close partnership, educational institutions at different levels—from primary schools at one end to the universities at the other. Such efforts are not generally undertaken. These will be of special significance in developing programmes for early identification and development of talent. Organisations like the *Dyana-Probodhini* of Poona which identifies and helps talented students at the secondary stage are needed in most big towns and cities. This brings me to the point that there is considerable scope for private voluntary enterprise in urban areas. In several towns and cities there are voluntary private organisations that provide books, scholarships or medical aid to students. There are other organisations that run subsidised cheap hostels. There is really no limit to the needs nor to the efforts we can build up on a voluntary basis, if we only have the will to try and to put in sustained effort.

In big cities, postings of teachers create a peculiar problem. Some time ago, I made a study of the postings of teachers working in primary schools under the Delhi Municipal Corporation. I took — my basic unit of study, an election ward of the Corporation. I found that in every election ward there were a number of schools and also the residence of a fair number of teachers. It would, however, be wrong to imagine that the teachers living in a ward were working in the primary schools in that ward. The actual postings of teachers showed that most of them were posted to such schools that the 'journey to work' became terribly significant for quite a few of them. I found some teachers working in schools close to their houses. But I found others who were working far away. I came across a teacher who had to travel about 20 miles a day to reach his school, the journey being performed partly by rail, partly by bus and partly on foot. The amount which the teachers spent on travelling to their schools and back also showed immense variations from nil to about Rs. 30 per month. Under these circumstances, transfers and postings of teachers assume terrific significance and get into all kinds of undesirable influences and pressures. There is urgent need, therefore to develop a rational policy on this subject and to implement it, without fear or favour. The provision of teachers' quarters, equitably distributed in different parts of the city, will also be of some help. What I have said here about Delhi applies equally to other big cities.

Finally, a word about problems of finance and grant-in-aid. The cost of education in urban areas is rising very rapidly, due partly to a rise in the cost of living, partly to increasing desire for education, and partly to a rapid increase in the urban population. The urban local authorities will not be able to meet this increasing burden without substantial State aid. Suitable programmes of grants-in-aid should, therefore, be developed. The proposals made by the Education Commission on this subject may be of use in this context. It says:

In devising a system of grants to municipalities for school education, it is essential to remember that the municipalities show an immense variation in their wealth and capacity to support education. For instance, a small municipality in a semi-rural township of 5 to 15 thousand population has a

very limited capacity to raise funds in support of education compared with a big corporation like that of Bombay. It is, therefore, necessary to devise a system of grant-in-aid which will vary from one group of municipalities to another; and in our opinion, the best procedure would be to adopt a method under which the municipalities could be classified on the basis of their wealth and the poorer municipalities given a higher rate of grant-in-aid than the richer ones. This principle was enunciated, as early as in 1937, by the Kale Committee of the then Bombay State, and a good deal of experience in its implementation has been gained in the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. This could be of considerable use to other areas adopting the programmes (p. 492).

#### REFERENCE

1. The populations suggested here are indicative. Another basis for classification could be available resources.

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### Institutional Planning (1968)\*

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We are really grateful of Dr. Mitra and Dr. Chaurasia for having conceived this idea of a National Seminar on Institutional Planning. In his inaugural address, Dr. Nagchaudhari has stated that the concept of institutional planning is not new and that it is an old wine in a new bottle. I entirely agree. As you know, there is very little that can be described as brand new in education. What is thought to be 'new' at first sight generally turns to be a re-discovery of some old familiar thing.

#### WHY INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

It is hardly worthwhile to discuss whether this idea is old or new. The more important question is whether it is relevant to our present situation. My humble submission is that it is. If we look at the history of civilisation, we may sum it up in one sentence: On one side, life is becoming bigger and vaster; and simultaneously, it is also taking greater and greater care of the smaller and the smaller. Man is thinking of landing on the moon; and thus the whole cosmos has come within his purview. At the same time, he is also working on the electron. It is in this working from the biggest to the smallest that the progress of civilisation lies. This is really an approach to God whom the *Upanishads* describe as i.e. 'smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest'. This realisation of God comes to us when, on one side, we stretch ourselves to the infinite and on the other, identify ourselves with the smallest and the humblest.

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\*Address delivered at the National Seminar on Institutional Planning at the Regional College of Education, Bhopal, November, 1968

Education also has to play a similar role. On one side, our concept of education must become large enough to embrace the entire universe and re-teaching of the man to peaceful co-existence in one world. On the other, it will also have to be humble enough to pay adequate attention to the needs of each individual. These two approaches are not contradictory as is sometimes feared. But unfortunately, man sometimes forgets small things in giving attention to the big things; and it is here that the danger lies.

In keeping with this broad philosophy, I would say that the process of educational planning can be summed up just in one sentence. At one end, educational planning should embrace the whole country and even the whole world; at the other, it should treat each institution as an individual entity which, in its turn, should be able to regard every child as an individual with his own needs and aspirations. We would have achieved our goal if we develop both these programmes together.

In this process of magnifying the scope of educational planning, we have unfortunately lost sight of the individual institution and of its uniqueness, which necessitates planning at that level. It is to correct this mistake that we propose to develop this programme of institutional planning in which we want to pay adequate attention to the macrocosm, the individual institution, without forgetting the wider horizon, the macrocosm of state and national planning.

#### OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

I am not going to make a long statement and I will confine myself to a few main issues. The first relates to the urgent problems in education to which the institutional plan is an answer.

- a) The first of these problems is to encourage initiative, freedom and creativity of the individual teacher. This is a very important problem because we must have rebels in education to rebuild it. If we analyse our educational system we find that, like our social organisation, it is too authoritarian in character. Every one of us is a little dictator or a despot; and in the broad functioning of our Education Departments, we find that very little freedom is allowed to the class-room teacher or to the individual institution. This has gone so deep in our blood that we never even realise it. I was holding a seminar of Inspecting Officers in

Delhi the other day. It was on "Creativity in Education". As it was a mixed audience of men and women, I tried to pull their legs and asked, "Who is more creative –men or women teachers?" Somebody said "Women teachers". "Very good," I said. "Why?" And one man said: "Sir, they are so much more obedient". This emphasis on obedience and conformity is so ingrained in our blood that I will not be surprised if a Director of Education were to issue a Circular, with reference to the recommendation of the Education Commission, that teachers should be given initiative and freedom to experiment, and say: "Government has been pleased to accept the recommendation of the Education Commission that teachers should have freedom to be creative. You are, therefore, directed hereby that, from such a date, you shall be creative in all your work. Failure to do so shall be taken serious note of." I do not quite rule out a circular of this type. I wish there were more experimentation in education than there is at present; and a major practical problem we have to tackle is to discover ways and means to give this freedom, this opportunity to experiment, to the individual teacher in the classroom.

- b) The second problem refers to the means needed to make good teachers effective. In India, we now have a very queer dilemma or problematic situation. On one hand, we have programmes for which we do not get good personnel to implement; and this becomes the main reason of the failure to implement them. On the other hand, we find that, even today, there are thousands of good teachers, young, enthusiastic, wanting to do something, and each one of them feels frustrated because he does not get an adequate opportunity and support to express himself. The question, therefore, that worries me is this: how can we give freedom and support to these teachers who are wanting to do something? I am not so much worried about getting people to implement the programmes we have in view. I think that, even if we can create a situation where a teacher wanting to do something new finds an adequate opportunity to express himself, we would have achieved a great deal. Putting it biologically, I might say, that we

want to create a few living cells of education where some creative thinking can be generated. It does not matter how few these cells are or how widely scattered they are. If we can somehow create an environment suitable for the coming into existence of these living cells, we would have taken the first great step; and in course of time, the infection will spread. There will be more cells of this type and the whole system will begin to grow.

I have a thesis about the manner in which a revolution in Indian education can come about. I have no hope of carrying a revolution from Delhi to the thousands of schools. That is impossible, partly because no revolution can be born in Delhi and partly because, even if such a revolution is born there, it will die by the time it reaches the remotest village. But there is every possibility of carrying a revolution from the village school to Delhi. In other words, if we get some creative thought at the Centre, the chances of this creative thought reaching the remote school and doing something useful there are rare. But if teachers are trying to face their problems creatively and originally, some new ideas might be born which might travel up to Delhi and fertilise the whole field of education. If this faith has some justification, I believe it has, we have to find a method wherein freedom can be given to teachers who want to do something so that they can become effective.

- c) The third problem relates to the involvement of teachers in educational planning. I do not think that, in the last three plans, the teachers were concerned either with the formulation of the plans or with their implementation. They were unconcerned to such an extent that I wonder whether they even knew what the plans were. When I go out on tour, I meet educational officers and teachers and ask them some questions to find out if they know the educational plan of their State. I find that the Directorates and the Secretariats know the plans. At the district level some officers know and some do not, but the vast majority only have vague ideas. The average secondary school headmaster or teachers does not know what the Plan is because he is not concerned. The primary schools have never seen the plan. This is so because the plan is merely a statement showing the allocation of funds with which

only the finance and Secretariat people are concerned. You will all agree that it is the teachers who have to implement the Plan, and that no one else can implement it. But if the teachers themselves do not know what the Plan is, how can they implement it? Here is perhaps one explanation as to why the plans have not been implemented satisfactorily. If we want better results in future, it is obvious that we must involve everyone of them, in the formulation of the plan and in its implementation.

- d) The fourth problem, is, that whereas, on one hand, there are so many things to be done for which we do not have resources, there are, on the other hand, vast existing resources and facilities which are not adequately utilised. There are thousands of things in education which have to be done, buildings have to be built; new classes have to be opened; new institutions have to be started; equipment has to be purchased; and so on. You can cite a hundred things which need to be done and which will need crores of rupees which we do not have. This is one side of the problem. But the other side also is equally important. There are thousands of things which can be done, even in the existing situation, and nobody seems to do them. As you said, Sir, very rightly there is a big range of 'shoulds', for which we have no resources and side by side, there is an equally big range of 'coulds' for which we have no workers. What we do at present is to point out to one or two things that should be done; and when we find that this cannot be done, we suddenly jump to the conclusion that nothing need be done at all. So long as we can find out some excuse or justification for not doing a thing which should be done, we conclude that nothing need be done and thus find a philosophical justification for our lack of enterprise and courage. This is a psychologically convenient situation. But there can be no progress on this basis. The question we should raise is this: what is the maximum I can do in the existing situation and with the existing resources? Having found this out, we should go about it in a spirit of dedication. In other words, we have to motivate people to recognise the 'coulds' and to attempt them rather than to concentrate on the 'shoulds' which are not practicable.

My claim is that the institutional plan is the unique answer to all these four problems, namely (1) giving freedom to the teacher

(2) making the good teacher effective, (3) involving every teacher in the formulation and implementation of plans, (4) emphasizing what can be done here and now by mobilising our existing resources rather than wait for the impossible to happen. If all these four problems have to be solved, we must develop the concept of institutional planning and tell each institution to prepare and implement its plans.

### How to Prepare Institutional Plans

Assuming that we decide to have institutional plans, the question arises: how do we set about them? How do we plan at the institutional level? I do not want to go into all the details of this aspect of the problem because this is what you will be discussing for two or three days. But I will make only a few broad general observations.

My first point is that there is no contradiction or conflict between institutional plans and the state or national plans. They have all to fit into each other. The national plan, for instance, does not decide everything. If it does so, it will again be an authoritarian plan. The national plan, therefore, should decide upon some broad programmes of national significance and leave a very large freedom to the state to plan in the light of their own conditions. The state plans will go into more specific details, within the framework of national plan. But in their turn, the state plans also should not decide everything and leave a good deal of freedom to the people at the district level to plan for themselves. The district plans will be drawn up within the broad framework of the State Plans. But even at the district level, we should leave a good many choices to individual institutions so that they can plan and implement their own programmes. Even in an institutional plan, there should be freedom to an individual teacher to plan some thing for himself; and so on. The existence of choices and planning, go together. If choices do not exist, there can be no planning. As choices exist at all the four levels-nation, state, district and institution- there should be a system of integrated plans at the national, state, district and institutional level. But while planning at any given level, one follows certain broad principles and leaves enough freedom and elasticity to the next level to make some choices of its own.

Similarly the plan at each level should try to implement the plans at all the higher levels. For instance, the institutional plan

will in some way, implement the national plan, the state plan and even the district plan. Planning is thus a two-way process. Ideas from the institutions and the choices they make; will rise up to the districts, then to the states and then, to the national level just as ideas from the national levels. This continuous process of downward and upward movement of ideas must go on if planning is to improve in quality. There is thus no conflict really between planning at these higher levels and at the institutional level.

My second point is that an institutional plan should be prepared mainly from the point of view of the best utilisation of existing resources. Every institution needs additional resources and if we concentrate only on the additional resources we need, the institutional plan becomes merely a charter of demands. Funds to meet these demands will not be available and this will land us only in frustration. We had a good example of this in the old Fourth Plan. The University Grants Commission decided that every university should prepare a plan for itself and requested them to do so. Now every university thought, quite naturally, that it should prepare as large a plan as possible and there was a competition in putting up big plans. The total of all such plans came to about Rs. 300 crores (this was an underestimate and it should easily have gone up to three thousand crores), against a sum of Rs. 58 crores that actually came to be allotted. This led to great frustration. The Director of Education in Andhra Pradesh carried out a simple exercise to find out the additional amount that will be required to give an adequate building to every secondary school in the State. He found that, for secondary school buildings alone, the cost would be Rs. 10 crores. For primary schools, he found that a sum of Rs. 30 crores was required for buildings alone. This is the sort of a picture that we get on the basis of additional funds needed. If we ask the institutions to plan, and do not tell them what or how to plan, they will naturally put forward large demands which will add up to fantastic totals. Then we will have to tell them that we do not have the money and this will make them lose faith in planning itself. This is a situation we have to guard ourselves against.

I am not saying that the additional resources are not wanted. They are wanted and let us try our best to provide them. But in institutional planning, let us ask this question to every institution: "What can you do within the existing resources available (or with

a little more feasible addition to it) by better planning, and harder work?" I do not think there is any escape either from better planning or from hard work. Education is essentially a stretching process and the teachers and the students have to stretch themselves to their utmost. If they refuse to stretch themselves, education does not even begin. You may provide the best equipment and the best buildings. But if this stretching is not there, you will have no education.

Unfortunately, this is an idea which people have not appreciated quite well. I remember my young days when I was a poor student and had to live on tuitions. One of the Jagirdars in my place thought that he should engage me as a tutor in English for his son who was nine years old and wanted to start learning English. The offer was very good. In those days when my monthly food bill came only to Rs. 3-50. I was offered Rs. 125 p.m. for an hour's tuition per day, with free transport in his car from my house to the Jagirdar's bungalow. I naturally accepted this princely salary. After about 15 days, the Jagirdar wanted to know how his son was progressing and sent for me. I said, "Your son is intelligent, but he is lazy. I have given him home-work which he does not do." The Jagirdar was surprised. He said, "Master Sahib, if my son has to learn the spelling, why have I appointed you?" This is the whole trouble. I think many of us today are still in the same mental attitude of that Jagirdar. Over large sections of the educational fields, the students do not want to learn and the teachers do not want to teach; and in the absence of these two basic things, we are planning buildings, methods, materials, or improvement of salaries. What I want to emphasize again is that education is essentially a stretching process. It has to stretch teachers and students to the utmost. We have to engage every student in a meaningful and challenging task for eight to 10 hours a day, for seven days a week and for 52 weeks a year. This is the challenge; and it cannot be met by external discipline. We have to create a climate of commitment to knowledge, commitment to social service, and commitment to hard work. I believe that the institutional plan should be used as a tool for this purpose.

It will be worthwhile here to give an illustration of the work done by my friends Shri Gobardhanlal Bakshi who is the Director of Education in Punjab. He is the first man who tried the idea of institutional planning. In his college, he found that stagnation was very high and that the results were only about 50 per cent. He

called a meeting of his teachers and asked them if anything could be done to improve the results. Only one decision was taken. Since the student's parents live very close by in the city, it was decided that every two months, a report of the progress of the students should be sent to the parents. "If the parents have entrusted their children to us", said the teachers, "we should at least tell them, every two months, how their sons or daughters are progressing." This was not an easy thing to do. They found that, if the task is to be done well, the written work of the student will have to be carefully evaluated; and since several teachers are concerned with each student, they had to meet regularly to discuss the progress reports. This was tried out for one year. There was no additional expenditure, no additional staff. It was only a question of giving proper leadership and showing the way. What was the result? The stagnation went down and the percentage of passes increased from 50 to 85 per cent. It is now proposed to extend the scheme throughout the Union Territory of Chandigarh.

In a plan of Rs. 145 lakhs for Chandigarh, this programme costs less than Rs. 2 lakhs. There are so many programmes of this type which cost little, cost nothing at all, except human effort and better planning. In a poor country, and India is one, people are caught in a vicious circle. They cannot improve education because they are poor; and they remain poor because education is not improved. This vicious circle can be broken only in one way, namely, through human effort. If we work hard, plan better, make the best use of resources available, we can break this vicious circle and get out of it. If we want the problems of education to be solved with the help of money alone, I do not believe that problems of education can ever be solved. Do we really have an idea of our poverty and of how little we are spending on education?

The entire educational expenditure in India is about Rs. 16 per head per year. In America, they spend about Rs. 1,200 per head per year on education today. The differences are fantastic. An average American spends about 70 dollars a year on cigarettes and we spend less than three dollars on education. What we spend on education in India is a little less than what an average American woman spends on sleeping pills. At such different levels of economic development and poverty, how on earth are we to compete with other countries on the basis of money? But we can compete on the basis of human effort, on the basis of talent, on the basis of better planning. If we do that, we shall put the talents

in our large population to an effective use and really make an advance.

An institutional plan must be addressed to questions like these: How do we reduce wastage? How do we reduce stagnation? How do we make better use of existing facilities? A hundred examples could be given of sound institutional plans. Let me just take one, the example of a school in Bombay. As you know, there is acute congestion in the middle class and lower middle class homes in Bombay city; ninety per cent or more of the families in Bombay live in single-room hutments; and a family often means parents, grand parents, sometimes four or five brothers, sometimes an older brother who is married, and so on. There might be two or three married couples also in that family, and all of them have to spend their whole time in one room. This is life in Bombay. The buildings are multi-storeyed and look very big, but the space a family occupies is just like a pigeon-hole. In this family life, the children have no place at home at all, no place to sit, no place to study. If the family is poor, they cannot also send their children out in the vacation. Now this friend of mine organises every year a summer camp in his school. It is very simple programme. In the summer vacation, the school building is vacant and the grounds are available. So the whole school building is turned into a dormitory. Every student is told that he can go home for food and stay and spend all his time in the school. He thus actually lives there, he sleeps there, and participates in the activities arranged. Some teachers are on duty and organise personal reading, guided study, recreation. The student can quietly spend the whole day and night in the school. I have seen these camps and noticed how happy the children are in these camps. They would have been happier if they would have gone to Mahabaleshwar or Matheran but that is not possible. The cost per student does not come to more than 3 or 4 rupees per year. But in that little cost, the students feel refreshed, their studies improve and the existing facilities are better utilised. There is no need to give other examples. The point I am making is that the very purpose of institutional planning is to utilise existing resources in the most effective manner and to overcome the shortcomings of material inputs through better planning and greater human effort. In every situation in India, there is a lot that can be done and there is no situation in India, however bad, where nothing can be done. It is for us to discover the best that can be

done in every situation through better planning and greater human effort and with little or no additional monetary inputs. This should be the basic idea of an institutional plan. One should assume that the additional resources are limited; and within them strive to do a good deal.

In institutional planning, everyone, teachers, parents, students headmasters, should be involved. I find that authoritarian attitudes often continue to dominate even when we create an institutional plan to give freedom to the teacher. In Rajasthan, I was attending a seminar on Institutional Planning in Kotah and a very enthusiastic headmaster from a rural area was describing the plan he had prepared for his school. He started by saying, 'In my school', 'my plan', 'I did', etc. I was waiting to see whether he would use the word 'we' once at least. But he did not. He was a very dedicated teacher and had completely identified himself with his school. But he had a blind spot on consultations. At the end, I asked him: "Don't you think it necessary to consult your teachers in preparing this plan?" "My teachers", he answered with surprise, "they are all my students. They all are good, and whatever I say, they accept as a matter of course." You will thus find that this authoritarian attitude enters even in this very attempt to liberate teachers. What we are out for is the freedom of the individual child; and the individual child will not get his freedom unless the individual teacher gets his freedom. The individual teacher will not get his freedom unless the attitude of the headmaster is changed; and the headmaster's attitude will not be changed until Inspector or Director changes. Thus it goes all the way up to the tip. This is another point we have to remember, we must involve every one.

I want to give a motto to institutional planning which is different from what we use at present. Our usual motto is: 'not failure but low aim is crime'. This is a good idea. But we use this idea in a wrong way. We choose a high aim and when we fail, we justify it philosophically as inherent in the high aim itself. This is a bad policy in all matters and especially in institutional planning. For institutional plan, therefore, our motto should be: 'not high aim but failure is a crime'. I do not mind how small a plan a teacher prepares. Let somebody say, "I want to improve the handwriting of my children." I will be quite happy. What you decide to do is immaterial. But once you decide to do something, I will not accept any excuse for a failure. This is what we have



to insist upon: doing things with dignity, with pride in one self and with success. If we can follow this up, the institutional plan can be put successfully on the ground.

The last point I would like to deal is this: how do we expand this programme? I have some suggestions for your consideration. The first is that the training colleges should develop this concept. In the training colleges, we instruct teachers in planning a lesson unit which is a much smaller and easier thing. While we should continue to teach them to plan lesson units, we must also widen the concept and include institutional planning as a definite item in the curriculum. Teachers and headmasters must be given an orientation and insight into problems of institutional planning. For this purpose, the training institutions will have to keep in touch with the schools in the neighbourhood and find out how they develop their plans and help them to formulate and implement them. This practical field experience will build up an expertise and knowledge on institutional planning which will be invaluable to training institutions. Similarly, our inspecting system also will have to be changed. Instead of the mechanical uniformity we have at present, we should develop a new system under which the inspector should be able to guide the teachers to prepare a plan for their institution and should also evaluate the school on the basis of the plan it has prepared. I have seen Inspection Reports and generally find that one inspection report report proforma is filled by the teacher himself and the only column which the Inspector writes is the 'general remarks'. Even here, the observations are of a routine type. This sort of mechanical inspection must go and the new inspection must be tuned to this idea of planning.

One last suggestion before I close. The techniques of educational planning will improve if we combine 'freedom' with 'confrontation'. We should allow each school freedom to develop a plan of its own; and then we should bring the schools together and confront the whole body of the schools with the good work which some school is doing. There is no such thing as a reform imposed from above. No one learns from the supervisors but the schools learn from themselves. And the supervisor's role is to make the schools confront each other, so that the good work in one becomes known to the others.

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### Role of Teachers in Educational Planning and Development (1968)\*

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#### INTRODUCTION

This address of Shri J. P. Naik, Advisor, Ministry of Education, Government of India, was delivered on 29 June, 1968 at the Regional College of Education, Bhopal, during the Three Day Conference on Teacher Education in the Western Region. The theme of the conference was "Teacher Education in the Fourth Five Year Plan".

The Conference has given a new turn to educational planning in India. The Conference agreed that the most urgent need of Indian education is to involve the teachers in educational planning. The Conference also agreed that the primary teachers, secondary teachers and college teachers should work towards closer collaboration and evolve a comprehensive plan of education which includes all the levels.

The address of Shri. J. P. Naik was delivered at the most appropriate time in the Conference. Shri. J. P. Naik's approach to educational rejuvenation was applauded by the participants and they raised several issues and problems which have to be faced in implementing this new approach. The discussion was extremely stimulating and Shri J. P. Naik, is summing up, indicated the steps which must be taken in the direction of involving the teachers in the formulation of institutional plans and their implementation. The Conference agreed with Shri. J. P. Naik that teachers can be involved in the formulation of plans at the institutional level. Dr. G. Chaurasia pointed out that

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\*Regional College of Education, Bhopal, July 10, 1968.



under-utilisation of facilities and talents was the most glaring feature of educational institutions in India. It is only through institutional planning that we can hope to promote better utilisation of the existing resources and facilities.

The impact of this new approach was remarkable and the Conference suggested that the Regional College of Education, Bhopal should invite a National Seminar on Institutional Planning. It was also suggested that a national drive may be launched for institutional planning and seminars and heads of institutions should be invited at District and State level. Shri M. H. Rao, Education Secretary, M. P. supported this approach and pointed out that teacher training institutions should provide educational leadership and demonstrate the effectiveness of institutional planning.

The staff members of the Regional College of Education, Bhopal, have adopted this approach and spent one week in the month of July in formulating the institutional plan for 1968-69. The experience of this planning has been extremely encouraging and many new ideas have come up. Individual staff members have displayed remarkable initiative and are happy with their participation in planning the work for the whole year. We are also preparing for national level and state level seminars on institutional planning in the near future. The Education Commission has rightly observed that the existing facilities in educational institutions are not being fully utilised. "This is a sad reflection on the efficiency of the educational system; and the general under-utilisation which they represent in a developing economy like ours is tantamount to an unpardonable waste of scarce resources." The Commission has therefore recommended that the number of instructional days in a year should be increased to about 234 for schools and 216 for colleges. The utilisation of these instructional days would be possible only with institutional planning done by the staff members. There is no escape from this challenge.

"The Role of Teachers in Educational Planning and Development" is an extremely cogent and inspiring address which will make every reader enthusiastic. The presentation is remarkable and it imparts a new hope and optimism in the reader. There is no doubt that if this new approach is implemented with

vigour, Indian education will be pulled out of the present morass in which it finds itself.

#### THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

We now have experience of three Five-Year Plans and three Annual Plans. From the point of view of teachers, it may be said that they have never been actively involved so far in the formulation and implementation of any of these plans. All the plans of these 18 years were prepared at the state and national levels so that the agencies primarily involved in their preparation and implementation were the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Education, the Education Departments in the Secretariates of the State Governments and the Directorates of Education in the states. It is true that the universities have been preparing their own plans under the general guidance and assistance of the University Grants Commission. But barring this solitary exception, no educational institution or their teachers were ever intimately associated with the formulation and implementation of plans. The average college, for instance, has hardly been involved in the process. The secondary and primary schools were not involved at all and were even ignorant of the main programmes taken up in the plans. Since the education process takes place in the classrooms, a truly effective educational plan cannot be prepared without the active involvement of teachers and cannot be implemented without their full and enthusiastic cooperation. It may, therefore, be said that this non-involvement of teachers in the preparation and implementation of educational plans is one of the major weaknesses in our system and unless it is effectively remedied, it will not be possible to promote the development of education in a big way.

The principle that teachers should be actively involved in the formulation and implementation of educational plans is unexceptionable and is accepted by all concerned. But its implementation in practice is held up on three main grounds. The first is that we have not yet been able to visualise and create the institutional machinery which will enable all teachers to effectively participate in the formulation and implementation of educational plans. The second is that there are several divisions in the ranks of the teachers which weaken the profession and

diminish its capacity for active participation in this programme; and the third is the general unconcern which the teachers themselves have shown so far in problems of educational planning and development and their failure to develop the necessary expertise and leadership. All these three weaknesses will have to be overcome if teachers are to assume leadership in educational planning and development and thereby benefit education as well as improve their own status.

#### THE ADOPTION OF A BROADBASED AND DECENTRALISED PLANNING PROCESS

The present system of educational planning is top heavy and resembles an inverted pyramid because most of the planning is done at the national and state levels only. It is necessary to decentralise and broad-base this planning process by the preparation of plans at two other levels—district and institution. The best results can be obtained only if an integrated process of planning at these four levels is evolved and planning descends from the top as well as arises from below.

1. *Institutional Planning*: The base of this new planning process will be provided by the institutional plans. I refuse to believe that one institution can be just like any other. On the other hand, I think that each educational institution should have a unique personality of its own like every individual student. The administrative system should therefore be such that each institution will be encouraged and assisted to plan its own individual development on the best lines possible.

The institutional plans will have several advantages. They emphasise programmes of qualitative improvement and, as these will have to be increasingly emphasised in the year ahead, institutional plans will have to be an inescapable component of the planning process of the future. They will make it possible to involve not only teachers, but also parents and even students effectively in the planning process; and what is more important, they will provide adequate scope for initiative, creativity, freedom and experimentation by teachers. They will also emphasise human effort rather than expenditure and thus serve to reduce the expenditure orientation which our plans have acquired in the past.

It is necessary to develop a proper technique of preparing institutional plans. There is a real danger that the institutional plans may degenerate into 'charters of demands' which will be beyond the capacity of any Government to meet. This will have to be avoided and the institutional plans will have to be prepared as 'programmes of action' which the schools can undertake within their present available resources or with such additions to them as are immediately practicable. In fact, planning at the institutional level can begin with the question: What can you do even within the available resources or with some small feasible additions to them? This question is rarely asked. But when one studies institutions closely, one finds that there is an infinite number of things which every institution can do even within the available physical and financial resources, if it can bring in a sense of duty, a lively imagination and hard work to bear upon the problem. For preparing institutional plans, therefore, it is this approach that has to be emphasised. As the Education Commission has said:

Even within its existing resources, however limited they may be, every educational institution can do a great deal more, through better planning and harder work, to improve the quality of education it provides. In our opinion, therefore, the emphasis in this movement should be, not so much on physical resources, as on motivating the human agencies concerned to make their best efforts in a coordinated manner for the improvement of education, and thereby offset the shortcomings in the physical resources. There are a large number of programmes which an educational institution can undertake on the basis of human effort and in spite of paucity of physical resources. These include: reduction in stagnation and wastage; improvement of teaching methods; assistance to retarded students; special attention to gifted students; enrichment of curricula; trying out new techniques of work; improvement method of organising the instructional programme of the school; and increasing the professional competence of teachers through programmes of self-study. It is the planning and implementation of programmes of this type that should be emphasized.

There is nothing new in this idea of institutional plans. There are a number of good schools which prepare and implement their own plans of development even now. In fact, an important

criterion of a good school is that it does so. What is proposed here is that this process which is now confined to a few institutions and is entirely optional, should become general and be resorted to by all educational institutions.

What are the steps needed to introduce a system of institutional plans in a State? The following suggestions in this regard are put forward for the consideration of the state governments:

- 1) It should be a condition of recognition and grant-in-aid that every institution prepares a fairly long-term plan of its own development. Against the background of this plan, it should also be required to prepare a Five Year Plan (coinciding with the State Five Year Plans) and an annual plan indicating the activities proposed to be undertaken during the ensuing year.
- 2) These plans prepared by the institutions should form the basis of the periodical inspections. The object of these inspections should be to help the institution to prepare the best plans it can, within its available resources and to guide it for their successful implementation. If this is done the present ad hoc character of inspection will mostly disappear.
- 3) Some broad guidelines for the preparation of such plans should be issued by the State Education Department. These will indicate in broad terms, the policies of the state government included in its own plans which will have to be reflected suitably in the plans of the institutions. It should, however, be clearly understood that the guidelines issued by the state government are recommendatory and not mandatory. It should be open to a school, for given reasons, not to take up a programme included in the guidelines, to modify the programmes given therein or even to take up new programmes not included in the guidelines.
- 4) An even more important measure is to arrange suitable training in the programme for all inspecting officers of the state and for headmasters. This should essentially be a responsibility of the State Institute of Education.
- 5) A long term plan will be prepared by the institution to be covered in such a period of time which it deems

convenient. The Five Year Plans as stated earlier, should be made to coincide with the State's own plans. For preparing the annual plans it is necessary to provide some specific time in the school year; and it is, therefore, suggested that about a week, in the beginning of each academic year and a week towards its end, should be reserved for the purpose. The following steps may be taken with advantage:

- a) The school should open for teachers on the prescribed day but the students should be required to attend a week later. In other words, in the first week of the opening of the school, the teachers should be on duty without being required to take classes. This period can then be conveniently devoted in continuous meetings and discussions and for preparing a detailed annual plan of work of the school in all its aspects: co-curricular, curricular, class plans, subject plans and detailed plans for each programme the school proposes to undertake.
- b) Similarly, at the end of the year there should be a week when teachers are on duty but the students have been let off. This week should be utilised for a careful evaluation of the implementation of the annual plans. The implication of the proposal is that the holidays for students will be about two weeks longer than for the teachers. This may appear as a loss of teaching time. But the gain in terms of quality of work will compensate it in full or even more.
- 6) Reports of the annual plan prepared in the beginning of the year should be available to the inspecting officer within a short time thereof. The same should be done about the evaluation carried out at the end of the year. It should be an important part of the school inspection to discuss these plans and their evaluation with the school staff and authorities (and where necessary, even with students).
- 7) An important point to be emphasized in institutional plans is successful implementation. A common tendency is to make ambitious plans which sound good on paper and then to implement them indifferently. This trend is also encouraged because the inspecting officers often compel schools to undertake a number of programmes. Thus

begins ineffective implementation, inefficiency and slipshod work which undermine the utility of this programme which is essentially qualitative. To avoid these weaknesses, it should be clearly laid down that 'not low aim but failure is a crime'. It should be left open to the schools to make small plans, if they so desire and no attempts should be made to force ambitious plans on them. It should, however, be insisted that, whatever the plan, it should be implemented with the best efficiency possible. Even if the beginning is humble, the institution may, in the light of the experience gained and as a result of the self-confidence which inevitably comes from successful implementation, take up more ambitious plans in future. A little patience shown to wait for such a development will yield rich dividends.

- 8) In preparing the institutional plans, a clear emphasis should be laid on adopting the democratic procedure and on involving all the agencies concerned. It is true that this is basically a responsibility of the headmaster or the principal, but the managing committees of the institutions will naturally have an important role to play. The headmaster must involve the teachers intimately. The local community will also have to be involved in many programmes. In some programmes, even students will have to be involved. This becomes all the more important as one goes up the educational ladder. It should be clearly understood therefore that the institutional plan is a sum total of collaboration of all these agencies involved.

Several steps will have to be taken if this basic idea of institutional plans is to be successfully developed. Some of the more important of these are the following:

- 1) The State Education Departments should be oriented to a new mode of thinking. Their present insistence on rigidity and uniformity should be abandoned in favour of an elastic and dynamic approach. They should also encourage initiative, creativity, freedom and experimentation on the part of institutions and teachers. It should be their responsibility to identify good schools and to give them greater support and large freedom to

enable them to become better, while, at the same time, providing the necessary guidance and direction to the weaker institutions with a view to enabling them to be good.

- 2) Although the institutional plans have to emphasise human effort rather than additional investment in physical and monetary terms, it is also necessary to emphasise that the state governments should strive to make more and more resources available to individual institutions through liberalisation of grants. Side by side, it is equally essential that every institution should strive to raise its own resources for its development. From this point of view, the following three steps will have to be taken:

- a) An Education Fund to be maintained in each educational institution, on the broad lines recommended by the Education Commission, assumes importance. The Commission has said that this fund should consist of (a) amounts placed at the disposal of the institutions by the local authorities; (b) donations and contributions voluntarily made by the parents and the local community, (c) a betterment fund levied in institutions, other than primary schools, for students; and (d) grant-in-aid given, on the basis of equalisation by the State Government.
- b) The system of grant-in-aid should be reformed to encourage excellence. The grant-in-aid to educational institutions should be divided into two parts. The first is the ordinary maintenance grant given on some egalitarian principles which will ensure the payment minimum expenditure for other items. But there should also be a special 'Development Grant' given to institutions on the basis of their performances. This will promote a competition for excellence among the different educational institutions and lay the foundation of a movement which, in the course of time, would succeed in raising standards all round.

- c) A deliberate policy to encourage the pursuit of excellence should be adopted. At the school stage, good schools should be allowed to develop into 'experimental schools' and freed from the shackles of external examinations. A similar step should be taken at the university stage by the development of 'autonomous colleges' or a more liberal exercise of the authority vested in the Government of India to declare institutions as 'deemed universities'. Encouragement and assistance should be given to outstanding departments of universities to grow into Centres of Advanced Study and in some universities at least, clusters of Centres of Advanced Study should be built up in related disciplines to strengthen and support one another.
- 3) The different educational institutions should help each other in developing this new concept of institutional plans. From this point of view, the programme of 'school complexes' recommended by the Education Commission, deserves consideration. Under this programme, each secondary school will work in close collaboration with the primary schools in its neighbourhood and help them through guidance services and sharing of facilities to improve themselves. The same process can be repeated at a higher level between colleges and universities on the one hand and the secondary schools in their neighbourhood on the other. At present, the teachers at different stages of education are engaged in a dialogue of mutual recrimination and passing the buck. For instance, the universities blame the secondary schools for sending up weak students and the programme of school complexes recommended by the Education Commission will put an end to all this and bring the different stages of education together in a programme of mutual service and support.

#### SCHOOL COMPLEXES

The leadership in the preparation and implementation of the institutional plans will again have to be provided by teachers themselves.

- 1) *Primary Schools*: A very difficult problem is the preparation of plans of primary schools – especially single-teacher schools. The first step to this end will be to train primary teachers and headmasters in this task. This itself is a formidable task, in view of the number involved. But this will not be enough and it will be necessary to provide them with continuous guidance and assistance. For this purpose, it is necessary to adopt the scheme of school complexes recommended by the Education Commission. Each school-complex will include a high/ higher secondary school as its centre and all the primary schools within an area of three to five miles of the central secondary schools. All these institutions should be treated as a unit for purposes of educational planning and development and an attempt should be made to regard it as a 'living cell' in education. It will generally be a small and a manageable group of teachers which can function in a face-to-face relationship within easily accessible distance; and it will also have the essential talent needed because there would be about half a dozen trained graduates within it. This group of teachers can easily help each other and ensure that the primary schools included within the group will prepare and implement satisfactorily plans of their own.
- 2) *Secondary Schools*: The guidance to the secondary schools in preparing and implementing institutional plans of their own will be provided partly by the secondary teachers themselves and partly by the college and university teachers. It is desirable that there should be a secondary school headmasters' forum in each district; and it should be a responsibility of this forum, working through its members, to give guidance to the secondary schools to prepare and implement their plans. Similarly, we may also create a school-complex at a higher level by linking a college or university department with a number of high/ higher secondary schools within its neighbourhood. The teachers of the college or the university department concerned can then work with the teachers of the secondary schools in their areas and guide them in the preparation and implementation of their plans.

### PANEL INSPECTIONS

Yet another method under which teachers can provide guidance in preparation and implementation of the plans of primary and secondary schools is to adopt the system of 'panel inspection' recommended by the Education Commission. At present all inspections of primary and secondary schools are carried out by departmental officers on an annual basis. While this should continue, the Commission has recommended that we should supplement it with a system of panel inspections of primary and secondary schools to be carried out every three to five years. Each panel will consist of a group of selected teachers or headmasters (including the headmaster of the school to be inspected) and may have a departmental officer as its secretary. The panel should spend a longish time in each institution so that it is able to evaluate its work and give proper guidance. The principal advantage of this system of panel inspection is that it will make the experience and expertise of senior and competent teachers available to all others.

### Colleges

The colleges will be in a position, without much difficulty to prepare and implement their plans. The guidance needed by them should be given by the universities.

### Universities

The universities should prepare and implement plans of their own and for this purpose they should set up Academic Planning Boards on the lines recommended by the Education Commission. These should consist of representatives of the universities, along with some persons from other universities and a few distinguished and experienced persons in public life. The Boards should be responsible for advising the university on its long-term plans and for generating new ideas and new programmes and for periodic evaluation of the work of the universities.

### District, State and National Plans

In the preparation and implementation of the institutional plans, as will be seen from the preceding discussion, the leadership will mainly vest in the teachers themselves, and other authorities will play an assisting role. In preparing and implementing plans at the

district, state and national levels, however, the appropriate authorities will have to take the lead. For instance, the Zilla Parishads or the District School Boards recommended by the Education Commission will be responsible for preparation and implementation of district educational plans. Similarly, the state plans in education will be prepared and implemented by the State Governments and the State Education Departments while the National plans will be a responsibility of the Government of India and the Ministry of Education. But it is necessary to take adequate steps to ensure that the teachers are effectively associated in the preparation and implementation of education plans at these levels also. From this point of view, the following suggestions are put forward:

- 1) The authorities responsible for preparation and implementation of District Development Plans in education should constitute Advisory District Councils of Teachers on which all organisations of teachers functioning within the district will be represented. These Councils should be consulted on all matters relating to planning and development of education.
- 2) Similarly, at the state level, the state government should constitute Joint Teachers' Councils consisting of the representatives of all the different organisations of teachers working in the state. These should be consulted on all matters relating to the salaries conditions of work and service of teachers as well as on all matters relating to the planning and development of education.
- 3) The Ministry of Education, in its turn, should constitute a National Council of Teachers consisting of representatives of all teachers' organisations functioning at the national level. Its functions should be similar to those of the Joint Teachers' Councils established at the state level and they should be effectively involved in preparation and implementation of educational plans.

### A UNITED TEACHING COMMUNITY

If the system of institutional planning is adopted as the foundation of the planning process and if the institutional machinery for consultation with teachers in planning and development of education is created at the district, state and national levels on the

lines indicated in the preceding section, the teaching community as a whole will be effectively involved in the preparation and implementation of educational plans. These proposals have been based essentially on the recommendations made by the Education Commission; and it is hoped that these will soon be accepted by all the concerned authorities.

The next important question which arises in this regard is whether the teaching community is at present in a position to assume this new responsibility. I have no doubts on this point. But I feel that the competence of the teaching community to assume this responsibility is considerably reduced by divisions within its ranks. The university teachers stand apart as a class by themselves. The headmasters of secondary schools form another group and the teachers of secondary schools also have separate organisations of their own. The primary teachers is again a separate group. There is at present very little intercommunication between these different groups and there are very few opportunities wherein they can work together for common ends and build up closer links between themselves. What is needed therefore is a programme or programmes which will help the teaching community to close up its ranks and to become a united teaching profession. This will immensely increase its authority and capacity to assist in the preparation and implementation of educational plans. In fact, if I were asked to name the most important single task to which the Indian teachers should address themselves at this stage, I will say, with a slight variation of the Marxist manifesto; "Teachers of all categories! Unite!!"

How can we create a unified teaching community in India? This will essentially need two main programmes:

1. *Changing of Attitudes:* The first is to bring about a change in attitudes which are often coloured by the relics of the old colonial tradition or by the caste system as reflected in education. The university teachers often behave as a superior class, the Brahmins of the profession, as it were. Even between them, they are further divided into different groups or sub-castes such as university teachers, college teachers, teachers in government colleges (who are themselves divided into groups like Class I, Class II, or non-gazetted), etc. The secondary teachers form a middle group, the Kshatriyas or Vaishyas of the profession. They

generally regard themselves as superior to and keep themselves aloof from the primary teachers, while the college teachers towards whose status they aspire keep them at a similar respectable distance. The primary teachers, who are the largest group, form the Sudras of the system and are often treated as such in all respects. It is obvious that in the India of tomorrow which aspires to create a new social order based on justice liberty, equality and the dignity of the individual, there is no place for such traditional and obsolete attitudes. All teachers belong to one community and are essentially equal and this feeling of brotherhood will have to be deliberately cultivated by all.

2. *Institutional Set-up:* Changes in attitudes are difficult to be brought about or maintained over a period of time unless they are supported by the appropriate institutional structures. If teachers of all categories are to cultivate a feeling of brotherhood, opportunities will have to be provided to them, through institutional structures of the proper type, to work with one another in common tasks and thereby to come to know and respect each other. In this context, it is interesting to note that the same structural organisation which has been recommended above for creating a broad based system of educational planning will also achieve the result of unifying the teaching profession. For instance, the system of school complexes will provide opportunities for secondary school teachers to work with primary school teachers and for university and college teachers to work with secondary school teachers. Similarly, the establishment of District Teachers' Councils, Joint Teachers' Councils at the state level, or the National Teachers' Councils at the all India level, on which organisations of teachers' of all categories will be represented, will be another important means of enabling teachers of all categories to work together for common ends. The same objective can also be attained by establishing subject teachers' associations. These will no doubt stimulate initiative and experimentation and assist in the revision and upgrading of curricula through the provision of better teaching materials and the use of



improved techniques of teaching and evaluation. But they will also have the additional advantage of bringing together, on a common platform, teachers of all stages from pre-primary to the postgraduate. Such associations should be formed at the district, state and national levels.

The Education Commission has recommended that universities should be involved intensively in programmes of improving school education through research, improvement of curricula, discovery of new methods of teaching and evaluation, training of teachers, discovery and development and talent and preparation of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials. This programme will provide opportunities to university teachers to work in close collaboration with teachers at all other levels.

#### DEVELOPING ADEQUATE COMPETENCE FOR FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL PLANS

While this unity of the teaching profession is a valuable strength which the teachers should cultivate to enable them to provide leadership in educational planning and development, it is not enough to meet the challenge of the situation. The teachers will also have to cultivate two other values or skills, interest and competence in educational planning, if they are to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

- 1) *Interest*: It is unfortunate that teachers have so far neglected this important subject and not much interest has been evinced by the teachers' organisations so far in the three Five Year Plans and in the three Annual Plans. They have not even criticised them either in depth or in a comprehensive manner. What is expected of them, however, is not mere criticism but even the formulation of an alternative plan which the public can compare with the official plan and judge for itself. It is obvious that this apathy will have to be abandoned, the sooner the better.
- 2) *Competence*: The teachers, either individually or through their organisations, will also have to develop the necessary competence in educational planning. It is true that this competence will grow as the decentralised programme described in the preceding section is evolved and teachers are actually involved intensively in the formulation and implementation of educational plans. But some formal and

institutional attempts to the same end are also needed. For instance, the subject of educational planning and problems of Indian education should find a place in the curricula of all training institutions at all levels. The teacher educators should be properly prepared for developing these programmes in their institutions and the necessary literature on the subject should be prepared in all the modern Indian languages. There should be at least a few centres where advanced level courses in educational planning will be provided at the post graduate stage; moreover, the teachers' organisations should set up working groups to study the subject and to educate the teaching community on all its aspects. As in western countries the teachers' organisations should conduct research and bring out publications and journals on educational planning and such efforts should receive encouragement and assistance from the state.

#### SUMMING UP

The main thesis that I have tried to put forward in this address is that it is necessary to involve teachers effectively in the formulation and implementation of educational plans if we have to achieve better success in educational development than what has been possible in the last eighteen years and especially if the programmes of qualitative improvement of education are to be increasingly emphasized. I further stated that, in order to involve teachers in these programmes, it is necessary to adopt a decentralised and broad based planning process which would include planning at the institutional, district, state and national levels, and to create appropriate teachers' organisations at the district, state and national levels of consultation on all matters of educational development. Even at the risk of violating the balance of space devoted to different aspect of the problem, I have discussed institutional planning in great detail, partly because of its intrinsic significance, but mainly because it is at this level that the involvement of teachers in the planning process is most intimate and effective. I further emphasise that the capacity of the teachers to assume these responsibilities in the formulation and implementation of educational plans will be considerably increased if the teachers close up their ranks and become a unified community, if they take deeper and more sustained interest in

problems of educational development and if they also strive to develop the expertise needed for the purpose.

I will now close on a note of appeal. The participation of teachers in the formulation and implementation of educational plans can yield rich dividends, especially in programmes of qualitative improvement. Several of these programmes such as improvement of textbooks, adoption of better methods of teaching and evaluation, intensive utilisation of available facilities, maintaining contact with community, individual guidance to students, inculcation of social and moral values, etc. do not need much investment in physical or monetary terms. But their success depends essentially upon the competence of the teachers, their sense of dedication and their identification with the interests of the students committed to their care. But unless we make every effort to cultivate these skills and values, we shall not be able to participate effectively in educational planning and to discharge our responsibilities to education and society. As Dr. D. R. Gadgil observed:

Qualitative improvement in education, whether we look upon it as a matter of better text books, improved teaching methods, or examination reform, depends to some extent on additional resources properly employed, but to a larger extent on the ability and sincerity of teachers. Even where the teacher student ratio, for example, may not be unfavourable, without special effort on the part of teachers, teaching methods cannot improve or the student enthused or self-disciplined. Experiments such as with internal assessment by institutions for even part of the examination have every where emphasized the same aspects and brought out the same deficiencies. It is not so much the resources as objectivity and a certain professional rectitude on the part of teachers and heads of institutions that seem to be required most in this behalf. Whereas, therefore, I would emphasise the need to attain a proper teachers-student ratio and to maintain minimum standards of accommodation and equipment, I would like to emphasise at least equally the importance of general acceptance of certain academic values and professional standards by the body of teachers at all stages on education elementary, secondary and collegiate.

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### Exchange of Teachers in India (1968)\*

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Exchange of teachers at all stages of education, and particularly at the university stage, can be an important instrument of national integration. It is therefore necessary to devise ways and means through which a fairly large scale programme for the exchange of teachers between different linguistic regions of the country would always be in operation. This will involve an understanding of (a) the difficulties on account of which teacher exchange does not take place on an adequate scale even at present and which are likely to hamper, it, in the years ahead, to an even greater extent and (b) the adoption of appropriate measures to overcome them.

In the past, and even at present, conditions have been largely favourable for organising exchange of teachers on an adequate scale. At the school stage, English used to be the medium of education till about 1927; and at the university stage, English still continues to be very largely the medium of education. If we were to value an exchange of teachers for its inherent advantages, it would not have been difficult to develop a programme for its, especially because the finances involved are never of a very large order. And yet, instances of exchange of teachers deliberately arranged have been very few in the past and still continue to be very low in the present. I am personally of the view that the teaching community of India, the universities and the State

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\*NIE Journal, NCERT, Delhi

Education Departments do not properly appreciate the advantages of having exchange of teachers on a fairly large scale and that, unless this attitude is changed, the programme will not develop even if finances are provided for the purpose. It is therefore essential that we educate the teaching profession and the authorities concerned on the significance of this programme for purpose of national integration and for improving educational standards and create an atmosphere which would create a fairly strong demand for this programme.

We should also remember that problems connected with the medium of education are creating and will create some difficulties for the development of this programme. At the school stage, the Indian languages are now the media of education in most institutions. There are, however, a number of schools in every part of the country where English is the medium of education and such schools with Hindi as the medium will gradually come up in increasing numbers. At the university stage, the Indian languages are being adopted as media of education and within the next five years or so, most of the teaching at the under graduate stage, will be done through the Indian languages. At the post graduate state the use of English may continue for a longer time, especially in institutions of all-India character where students from different linguistic regions are expected to study. But even here, the use of Hindi will become increasingly more frequent. Moreover, there will be a few institutions of higher education in every linguistic region which will adopt English and Hindi as the media of education on the same broad lines as those of similar institutions at the school stage. How will the exchange of teachers on an adequate scale be possible in such circumstances? This is the question which has to be pondered and to which satisfactory answers will have to be provided.

One point can be easily made: there will be no difficulty in the exchange of teachers in schools and colleges where the media of education is the official languages of the Union—Hindi and English. It would, therefore, be easy to devise a programme for

a large scale exchange of teachers between institutions of this category functioning in different linguistic regions. This is mainly a problem of organisation and providing finances. I think that priority programmes of this type should not be held on financial grounds—when these are needed only on a small scale – and that it should be easy for the UGC and the Ministry of Education to provide the necessary organisational machinery.

Difficulties will, however, arise in schools and colleges where Indian languages other than Hindi are the media of education. Unless special measures are adopted, right from now, the exchange of teachers in these institutions – they will be the bulk of institutions in the country – will not be possible. For meeting this situation, the following suggestions are put forward.

#### BILINGUAL TEACHERS FOR THE SCHOOL STAGE

We must make deliberate attempts to develop bilingual teachers at the school stage. They are needed even for the usual programme of instruction if the three-language formula is to be implemented in earnest. For teaching the three languages, included in this formula, it will be possible to appoint separate teachers only in big schools. But the vast majority of our schools are small and the cost of the programme will be prohibitive if we work on an assumption that the teachers of every language will be separate. What is worse, most of these teachers will be underutilised if they are required to teach only one language. The Education Commission therefore recommended that we must emphasize the preparation of teachers who will know two Indian languages—their mother tongue and one another Indian language, excluding Hindi (Teachers of Hindi will be in a separate class by themselves). Such a programme is not difficult to develop. For instance, the Education Commission has made the following recommendations for this programme:

- a) At the school stages, there should be arrangements, in every linguistic region, for teaching every Indian language, other than the language of the region and Hindi, in a few

selected institutions. In Maharashtra for example, arrangements for the teaching of Hindi will be made in all schools. But in addition, in a few selected schools, arrangements should also be made for teaching other Indian languages like Bengali, Tamil, Urdu, etc. The students should learn these languages, either in addition to or in lieu of English and/or Hindi. The main advantage of this programme will be that, in every region, there will be a fairly large number of persons who have studied one or other Indian language.

- b) At the university stage, it should be possible for a student to combine the study of two modern Indian languages, both for his first and second degrees. This will create, in each linguistic region, a number of persons who are familiar with the literatures in other Indian languages and some of whom may even be able to contribute to them.

Programmes of this type, when fully developed, will establish close inter-regional ties and help to strengthen national integration. They will also create a band of bilingual teachers who can be exchanged without difficulty by schools in different parts of the country.

#### EXCHANGE OF TEACHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY STAGE

In order to encourage the exchange of teachers at the university stage, two main conditions will have to be fulfilled, namely, (1) the average Indian university teacher will have to be bilingual, and (2) the average student will have to be trilingual. This point of view has been very clearly explained by Dr. T. Sen, Union Education Minister, in his address to the Vice Chancellors' Conference held at New Delhi in September, 1967. Dealing with the problem of the mobility of teachers and students when Indian languages have become the media of education at the university stage, Dr. Sen said :

- The mobility of teachers and students, in the new set-up, will be facilitated to a very large extent, in the special institutions which will be maintained and promoted for the purpose of cutting across linguistic barriers. Even in the institutions which use the regional languages as media, four steps would have to be taken to promote them. First, every teacher, as the Education Commission has recommended, should be expected to be bilingual, in the sense that he can teach in his mother tongue and, at his option, either in English or in Hindi. Second, every student should be expected to use his mother tongue or regional language as medium and should be able to read books and follow-lectures, both in English and Hindi. Third, special programmes should be developed in the Central sector to encourage the movement of teachers and students, so as not to leave these activities to mere chance; and fourth, special intensive courses of short duration, using the latest teaching techniques, should be available for students to learn regional languages other than their mother tongue. These measures, it is felt, will adequately promote the movement of teachers and students.

#### FACILITIES FOR LANGUAGE STUDY

The last point raised by Dr. Sen, namely, that facilities for study of languages by modern methods (e.g. use of language laboratory, etc.) should be provided, is of special significance. Our students now go to France, USSR and Germany, study French, Russian or German in about three-four months, and are able to use them as media of education. There is just no reason why such methods of quick language teaching should not be developed for Indian languages and once discovered, facilities for them should be provided on a large scale. This will greatly facilitate exchange of teachers and students.

It will be seen from the foregoing discussion that it is possible, with some effort, to maintain a large scale programme of exchange of teachers and students, both at the school and university stages,

even in the years ahead when the Indian languages will be used as media of education at all stages and thereby help to strengthen national integration and to improve educational standards. What is needed is a planned effort, right away. I hope and pray that this will come forth.

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### A New Deal for Teacher Education

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I am very grateful to the organizers of the Basu Memorial Lecture and to the Alumni Association of the C. I. E. for inviting me to deliver the Memorial Lecture this year. I deem it an honour and a privilege, partly because of my friendship with Prof. Basu and the great reverence in which I hold him and partly because I find myself, although undeservedly, in the distinguished company of brilliant speakers who have delivered the lectures in the earlier years, Dr. K.G. Saiyidain, Prof. Humayun Kabir, Prof. M. Mujeeb and Prof. V.K.R.V. Rao. I am sure I am not worthy of this honour. But I could not say no to an occasion when I could pay by humble tribute to the memory of a dear departed friend.

#### PERSONAL MEMORIES

Prof. Basu and I were close friends and shared several things in common. You are probably aware that we are both historians of education. Basu wrote his History of Modern Education in India and Nurullah and I wrote a book on the same subject. His book was as "light" as ours was 'weighty'. He, therefore, used to tell me jokingly: "Naik, I have learnt one lesson from you, viz., if one must write a book at all, it should be a big one because people will not have the energy and the time to read it and, awed by its weight, they not criticize you either". We were also interested in another programme: editing of historical documents. Prof. Basu did a tremendous service to the cause of History of Education in India by re-publishing Adam's Reports (1835-38). He also edited, as my request, a volume in the series of historical papers which Parulekar and I brought out on behalf of the Indian Institute of Education. There was also a third thing which we shared in common and which, although not well-known, is dear to my

heart. We both took part in the freedom struggle and spent some time as His Majesty's guests. This reminds me of a wider truth. The basic problems in education and politics are so close that several persons have found it essential to combine both in their life. I divide such persons in two categories. The first is the category of persons who devote all their early life to education, then realize that none of the problems they are facing can be solved unless they can exercise political authority, and so turn to politics in their later careers. In this group, you can put men like Gopal Krishna Gokhale or Sir R.P. Paranjape of the last generation or men like Prof. V.K. R.V. Rao, Prof. Hiren Mukherjee or Prof. Balraj Madhok in this generation. The second group of people begin their life in politics, discover later that no political problem can be solved unless the people are educated better and so turn to education in their later lives. Basu and I belong to this latter group which is probably a minority group. You can, therefore, well imagine why I deem it a privilege to be associated with this memory and to deliver this lecture.

#### MAIN THEMES OF DISCUSSION

The subject of my lecture is: "A New Deal for Teacher Education". Two main considerations weighed with me in making the choice. The first is that Basu was keenly interested in teacher education; and the second is that, in my opinion, there is a possibility of giving a new deal to education in the Fourth Plan which will begin next month. For the first time in modern history, there is, in the Central Plan, a provision of Rs.8 crores for teacher education and a suitable machinery has been created to administer it. For the first time again, there is a possibility of the programme of Central assistance reaching every training college in the country and helping it to improve itself. Every teacher educator and every education department in every university can hope to be assisted. I, therefore, think that this is an occasion when all of us who are interested in teacher education should take stock of what we have been able to do or not to do, what the present position is, and what are the steps to be taken in future to make our limited resources take us a long way on the road to progress.

In this new deal for teacher education, we will have to re-examine a number of basic issues and re-orientate our policies in the light of the programme of educational reconstruction which we are going to undertake

Among these, the following five are most important:

- (1) Objectives of teacher education ;
- (2) Scope of teacher education ;
- (3) Techniques of teacher education ;
- (4) Programmes of teacher education ; and
- (5) Essential conditions for the success of a new deal for teacher education.

I shall examine these issues briefly, one by one.

#### OBJECTIVES OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The first important problem we have to examine relates to the objectives of teacher education. We must ask ourselves one important question at this juncture: Are we satisfied with the objectives which we had placed before ourselves in teacher education in the past ? I shall be putting forward some answers to these questions which may or may not be acceptable to everyone. But conclusions apart, even a discussion of these basic issues in depth will be of great help.

Teacher education is, after all, a type of education and its objectives also can only be broadly parallel to those of education itself. As you know, education is a three-fold process and involves imparting of knowledge, teaching of skills and inculcation of attitudes, interests and values. Of these three aspects of the educational process, the 'Imparting of knowledge', is the least important ; somewhat more important is the teaching of "skills" ; but the "inculcation of attitudes, interests and values" is the most important of all. This is true of teacher education also. A teacher must have knowledge. But any amount of knowledge we can give to him during his training period will become inadequate, sooner rather than later. The growth of knowledge is so rapid in the modern world that we should emphasize not the imparting of precise knowledge so much as the awakening of curiosity and building of habits of self-study. The teaching of practical skills is more important. But even here, one finds that techniques of teaching and evaluation are rapidly changing? So that an emphasis on the cultivation of an experimental approach assumes much greater significance than the imparting of any system of pedagogy, however modern or significant. But above all, it is the inculcation of right attitudes, interests and values which are of the highest significance in teacher education and I am afraid this is

a programme which has received very little attention so far. The attitudes and values which are essential for a teacher are: a commitment to learning; a commitment to quality; a willingness to experiment and to take risks; a willingness and capacity to evaluate his own performance and take decisions for further self-improvement; understanding of commitment to professional ethics and code of conduct; and an identification with the interests of students committed to his charge. These attitudes and values are of very great importance in the life of a teacher of tomorrow. We must, therefore, replan our programme of teacher education in such a way that the inculcation of these attitudes and values becomes its first and most important objective.

#### SCOPE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The second basic issue I would like to raise relates to the scope of teacher education. We use two phrases: "teacher education" and "teacher training" as almost synonymous and interchangeable with one another. Some colleges call themselves training colleges and others call themselves colleges of education, merely as a matter of taste. But should we really treat these two terms as synonymous for inter-changeable? Perhaps not.

As you know, there are two main areas of content in the preparation of a teacher: (1) his command over subject-knowledge and (2) his capacity to teach the subject. In so far as mastery over teaching techniques is concerned, I would use the word "training". If you add to it his command over subject-knowledge also, I would call it teacher education. In other words, I would prefer to use the term 'teacher education' to include both the elements, viz., command over the subject-knowledge and command over the methodology, whereas I would confine the use of the expression 'teacher training' only to the methodology of teaching. On grounds of clarity, such a distinction is worth-making, especially in academic discussions. Its need increases further because these two types of content of teacher education are provided in two different types of institutions.

Unfortunately, the significance of subject-content in teacher education has not received adequate attention in our country, except at the primary stage. In the training of primary teachers, it is not only methodology, but subject matter also has always been included until recently. This was mainly due to the fact that the primary teachers were generally deficient in general education..

For example, in the first training college for women teachers that was started in Poona, it was laid down that any woman above the age of 18 who said that she was willing to be a teacher would be admitted. The word 'said' is important because this woman aspirant for admission was not expected to be even literate. As there were no literate women who could be trained as teacher, a 'desire to become a teacher' was felt to be good enough as an entrance qualification. The training college in Poona thus started by admitting illiterate women and began with the teaching of the alphabet. Later on, the admission qualification was raised to the completion of Class V, then to Class VII. But all these were low attainments in general education, and the training of a primary teacher always included a programme to improve the subject knowledge of the teachers. The situation has changed only recently when matriculates or higher secondary students began to be recruited as primary teachers and subject knowledge has begun to disappear from the training programmes for primary teachers as well. The training of the graduate teacher, however, never included a programme for the improvement of subject knowledge because a graduate was and is supposed to know enough of his subject.

This may have been right in the past. But we must ask ourselves whether it is right at the present time or whether it will be right in the days ahead. I find that we are facing dilemma in our programmes to improve secondary education. On the one hand, we are making an effort to upgrade the curricula of secondary schools. We want the schools to teach more of science, more of history, more of everything under the sun. This implies that we want a teacher who has a much better command over the subject-knowledge than in the past. On the other hand, the standards at the collegiate stage are going down so that every graduate teacher we now get has a lesser command over the subject-knowledge than in the past. In other words, we are called upon to teach more and more of each subject with the help of a teacher who knows less and less of it. This is the practical situation we have to face. It is easy to say that, to improve these conditions, we must improve the standards of higher education or raise the qualification prescribed for secondary teachers from B.A. to M.A., from B.Sc. to M.Sc. But the M.A.'s and M.Sc's are not available in sufficient numbers and the raising of standards in higher education is far from easy and will not give immediate results.



If the reform of secondary education is to have any meaning, therefore, we must find a suitable method to improve the subject-knowledge of secondary teacher. This is of far greater importance than their methodological training. And what I have said of secondary teachers is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of primary teachers as well.

It is difficult for the people in Delhi to realize how serious a problem is created in secondary education by the inadequate command of the average teacher over his subject knowledge. Delhi is a big metropolitan area with good colleges, good traditions and big schools. You also have a well established practice that a teacher in a secondary school will teach only that subject in which he has taken his degree so that a minimum subject-knowledge is always ensured. But let us realize that this is not so everywhere. Such a rule exists only in six States: and in the other, it is not even theoretically accepted. Even where it is theoretically accepted. It is impossible to enforce it in the rural areas or in small schools. Fifty per cent of our secondary schools have an enrolment of less than 100 and a staff of not more than five teachers. In such schools, the single-subject teacher is an unknown phenomenon and every teacher has to teach at least two subjects and sometimes, even three. The net result is that any subject is being taught by any teacher. We carried out a survey in a district, which I would not like to name, and found that 36% of the teachers who were teaching science had no degree in science and had not studied science beyond the matriculation stage. Less than one per cent of the geography teachers had studied the subject at the university. The most popular subjects at the university stage are Economics, Politics and Sociology and these have no counterparts at the school stage. So the teachers, who studied these subjects at the university, generally teach a subject of which they know little. There are even worse examples. A graduate of Marathi, for instance, will be found teaching Mathematics, a graduate of Hindi teaching Physics, and so on. George Bernard Shaw once defined education as a process in which "somebody teaches what he does not know to one who is not interested in it." This is very true of what is happening in a large majority of class-room situations in secondary schools at present ; and to a lesser degree, it happens in the primary schools also.

In a situation of this type, I would certainly emphasize subject knowledge far more than methodology. It is quite all right to train teacher to teach history provided he knows history. But if he does not enough of history, he must first be taught history.

There is another reason why subject-knowledge must be more emphasized now and in the days ahead, namely, the explosion of knowledge. The stock of science knowledge, for instance, is doubling itself every ten years and hence the teachers' knowledge, his command over his subject, will be out of date in no time. But no corresponding revolution is taking place in the methodology of teaching. The reasons are obvious. Hundreds of university departments and research institutions with plenty of resources are involved in adding to the stock of knowledge so that there is a continuous addition to the content of the subject. But almost all the research in methodology is conducted mostly in training colleges with their meager resources and meager staff so that the gap between the growth of the subject-knowledge and the methodological change is continuously widening.

The point that I want to emphasize is this: The scope of teacher education includes training in methodology as well as improving subject-knowledge, the latter being of far greater significance than the former. We must, therefore, abandon the old concepts under which teacher education was restricted to training in methodology only; and as a corollary to this, we must give up the monopoly that we have been claiming, for teacher education, on behalf of the teacher's colleges. Instead, we must welcome the view that teacher education includes both subject-knowledge and pedagogical training and regard it as the joint responsibility of teachers' colleges (which will, by and large, confine themselves to pedagogical training) and of colleges of general education and the universities (which will take over the task of improving subject-knowledge). This, in my opinion is the most important reason to bring teacher education within the direct stream of university life.

#### TYPES OF TEACHER EDUCATION

This leads me to the next basic issue I propose to discuss, viz., the types of teacher education. Until now, our emphasis has been on pre-service education. The prevailing view was that a teacher should be trained at the beginning of his career and for all time to come so that the idea of in-service education was not accepted

at all. It is only recently that we have started a few programmes of in-service education in a small way. But even now, the relative emphasis continues to be pre-service education. Take, for example, the primary stage. The duration of the training course at this stage is one year in some States and the proposal is to extend it to two years. There is nothing wrong in this. But I do not like the position that all available resources are being spent on pre-service education without any provision for in-service education. If I were given the choice, resources being the same. I would advise a State Government to add an in-service programme of 2 to 3 months every five years of service—this will cost the State as much as a pre-service programme of one additional year—rather than increase the duration of pre-service education to two years without any provision for in-service education. Similarly, a question is often raised: should the B.Ed course be of one year or of two years? Many teacher educators are of the view that one year is too short a period for the proper training of the graduate teacher and that the duration of this course should be raised to a minimum of two years. I would beg to differ slightly and say this: If I have the resources to increase the duration of the training course for graduate teachers from one to two years, I would rather spend the additional funds in providing in-service education to all secondary school teachers at the rate of 2 to 3 months every five years, and, what is even more important, I will utilize a good deal of the additional time for the improvement of subject-knowledge. After this reform is implemented, when I get additional resources for one year more, I will lengthen this one year course to two years. In other words, a provision for in-service education which will improve both subject-knowledge and methodology is far more important and must become indispensable part of any programme of the reform of teacher education.

#### METHODS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

This brings me to the methods of teacher education. We have so far emphasized full-time institutional courses only. I think a time has come when we should emphasise part-time courses. There is also a very important new programme that we have to adopt, viz., correspondence courses. I was discussing sometime ago, with authorities in West Bengal, how their teacher education should be improved. The situation in West Bengal, from the point of view

of teacher education, may be described as desperate. The State has only 34% of its primary teachers trained and the duration of the training course is one year only. If we want to extend the duration from one year to two years and train all the primary teachers, the cost is astronomically large, larger than the entire educational plan of the state. The situation is similar in Assam: there is just no money for a development of the programme on traditional lines. But why must the traditional programme be adhered to? I had to face a similar situation in Kolhapur, back in 1943, when I took over as Education Secretary. I found that out of 200 primary teachers in the city, only six were trained. Many of them had already put in several years of service, had families, and were unwilling to go out of the city and spend time in training institutions. So what we did was that to extend the one year course over two years and convert it into an evening course. The result was that at a very small cost, and in a very short time, we could train all teachers, with their consent and without inconvenience. On the same lines, I suggested to Government of West Bengal that they should develop programme of part-time teacher education. West Bengal is a predominantly urban area with a large number of secondary schools which could be used as training centres. I, therefore, advised the state that they should start an evening course wherever about 40 teachers are available, and utilize all the facilities available in local secondary schools and colleges to train the teachers. On this basis, I found that the problem was quite capable of an early and satisfactory solution. This can be done in other places also. In my opinion, what is needed, is an emphasis on unorthodox / approaches to the solution of this complex problem and this is what we have to think of.

#### SUMMING UP

Let me, therefore, sum up:

I have pointed out that we need revolutionary changes in the objectives of teacher education, in the scope of teacher education, in the methods of teacher education (pre-service and in-service) and in their relative emphasis, and on the techniques of teacher education, whether institutional, part-time or correspondence.

I shall also refer to one more important item before I leave this subject, viz., the involvement of teachers of all stages in programmes of teacher education. So far, it is unfortunate that we have not involved teachers and teachers' organization in the

programme of teacher education. You will agree with me that teachers have to be involved in all programmes of educational development. But the minimum educational programme in which the teachers' and their organizations should be involved is teacher education. I am, therefore, strongly of the view that, in all our programmes of developing teacher education, teachers and teachers' organizations have to be brought squarely into the picture.

#### ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

I now come to the last part of my discussion, viz., the essential conditions for success of any programme of reform in teacher education. I will refer briefly to three points.

The first is the need to abandon the unfortunate tradition under which we equate education with pedagogy. Throughout the years, education has not meant anything more than methods of teaching to us. I do grant that methods of teaching are important and that they will have to be well-taught. But I am afraid that education is a much broader concept. We have to bring in more and more of these broader aspects of education within our training system and especially, lay much greater emphasis on subject / knowledge, on social aspects of education, on administration, on planning, and so on.

If this is to be done, a second important conclusion follows, viz., that we have had too much of in-breeding in the teacher training profession in the past and that this will have to be given up in the future. Some of you may think that I am making a harsh statement. But I feel it do be my duty to point out that, in the profession of teacher education, we have too much of an in-breeding between pedagogues.

Let me first explain what I mean by in-breeding. If one wants to be a teacher in a school or a lecturer in a training college, he must be a B.T. This is the minimum condition at present for all positions in schools, in teacher education, and in administration. So the B.T. examination becomes the 'charm' of the teacher; and like the 'charm' of a woman, it holds a unique position: if you have it, it does not matter how little you have everything else; and if you do not have it, it matters even less what else you have. In other words, if you a B.T., it does not matter how ignorant you are in everything else and if you are not a B.T., you might be the wisest

man under the sun, but you will not be able to enter the portals of a training college.

Now let us see what happens because of this attitude. Who goes in for the B.T.? My observations do not apply to the present company, that is always honourably excluded, but it will be no exaggeration to say that it is only the third-rater or worse that generally goes in for B.T. My friend, Principal P.K. Roy, made a study of the admissions to all B.T. Colleges in the whole of India in one year and found that, out of 24,000 or so admissions that were made, those who were second or first class, were less than 8 per cent. In some colleges, we were told that their only choice was to select a person who has failed twice at the B.A. or three times at the B.A. I have not seen a better device for eliminating talent than the B.T. examination; and after all talent is completely eliminated and the premises are made safe for mediocrities and less than mediocrities, we start our programme of recruitment and promotion among the teacher educators and educational administrators. This is an impossible and absurd situation and I do not think that teacher education can be improved in this way. If we want prestige to come to teacher education—we must all accept that teacher education does not have prestige today—the only way out is to invite prestigious people to work in training colleges or for teacher education. There is also an alternative, viz., people who are working in the training colleges should improve themselves and acquire prestige. This is a very hard and a very long way ; but it will have to be emphasized. What is even more important, we must welcome eminent scientists, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, etc., to teacher education. I have no doubt that, if a man like Prof. M.N. Srinivas were to begin to teach sociology of education in a training college, the whole atmosphere of the training college and the prestige of teacher education will undergo a metamorphosis. We must, therefore, broad-base ourselves. If teacher education has to improve, If we have to get support from all sectors of education, the best people in the country, whatever their disciplines, should be made to take interest in education as a discipline and to take a still deeper interest in teacher education. We must throw our doors open to bring in a great deal of inter-disciplinary thinking and inter-disciplinary personnel to work in training institutions.

My third point is that the selective approach does not have much application in teacher education. We have a theory that, for

qualitative improvement, we must have some peaks of excellence. The Regional College idea was put forward from this point of view and it was said that, if teacher education is to be improved, we must have some peaks of excellence like the Regional Colleges. I have no quarrel with this idea, subject to certain reservations, in other fields. For instance, the model or peak of excellence we create must be within reach of the majority of institutions and repeatable. But even when such conditions are fulfilled, I do not think that the selective idea is good for training institution because, in this sector, we cannot allow any institution to be sub-standard. I would not like even a school or a college to be sub-standard. But I am prepared to make a compromise and let some school or college fall below average. But no training institution should be sub-standard because the teachers it trains will damage hundreds of schools. I would, therefore, suggest a programme of reform which should reach every institution for teacher education and raise it to minimum levels. I would also emphasize, from this point of view, the production of materials for teacher education and experimentation. This is one area where the Regional Colleges, the NCERT and the University Departments of Education, or Schools of Education that we propose to start will have an important role to play.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Friends, I do not think I shall take more of your time. I have put forward some questions and suggested some tentative solutions. But do not insist on any of these. My plea to you will be, not for agreement on my views, but for a commitment to the cause. In the Fourth Plan which begins next year, there is a fairly large allocation for improvement of teacher education, an allocation the like of which was never made in the past. This is, therefore, our one chance of doing something worthwhile for teacher education. Let us therefore not miss this rare chance. Let us raise these basic questions, answer them to the best we can. There will not be, and need not be a single answer to any of these questions. There could be a multiplicity of answers, each one of which could be tried. Let us, therefore, keep an open mind on every issue. But let us agree on one important point, viz., to make the most thoughtful and earnest effort that we are capable of for improving teacher education in the Fourth Five-Year Plan.

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### Organisation of Data Collection (1970)

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#### NEED FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF STATISTICS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

I shall make a brief statement and raise some points about the organisation of statistical data collection.

The first point which I want to make and which is generally forgotten is that one of the main purposes of statistics is that they should help in planning and administration. The decisions in administration and planning as you know, are not taken at one but several different levels. The Headmasters, the Inspectors, the Directors of Education and the Minister, all have to take some decisions at their respective levels. Obviously, the statistics required at different levels for taking the different types of decisions are different. Our statistics should, therefore, be so organised that the same set of statistics is not presented at different levels and that different statistics are available for use at different levels. For example, the statistics of enrolment and daily attendance are very necessary for the Headmaster, but I am not sure they are equally important, say, to the Inspector who is in-charge of a group of schools. He may want to know only the monthly average attendance figures. If you come to the district or the director's level, he may have no time to read these statistics and may be satisfied if he has the average attendance once in a year, to get an idea of the trend.

At the state level of we have the enrolment figure for one day of the year that satisfies our purpose. You will thus see that a given set of statistics does not have the same importance at different levels where decisions are taken. In the same way it will be easy

to show that the set of statistics which have significance at one level where decisions are taken are very different from the set of statistics which will be required for taking decisions at another level.

In practice, however, this need for variety is ignored. Statistics are collected in one form, generally for use at the highest level of policy making, so that they are not found useful or interesting by those functioning at lower levels.

Let me give two illustrations. The first is the statistics which we in India collect about all affiliated colleges. A very big form is prescribed for this purpose which runs into 23-30 pages. The Government of India sends four or five copies of this form to each college. The College Principal fills it and then sends it to the university concerned and to the State Education Department concerned. Then the state governments and the universities prepare consolidated statistics which they send to the Government of India. We then prepare tables and evolve the necessary statistics for the country as a whole. What happens in fact in this case is that the final statistics are used, to some extent, by the Government of India and the University Grants Commission. But they are rarely used at other levels, namely, the college, the university, and the state governments. If we had formulated different types of statistics which could be useful for taking decisions at these different levels, the utility of the statistical service would have been much greater.

I will take another example. The Government of India has prescribed a proforma in which the relationship between the total enrolment in a school and the total number of teachers working in it is established. It is a two-way table in which we give the number of teachers on one side and the enrolment, divided into suitable intervals, is given on the other. The main idea was to find out the schools which are over-staffed and those which are under-staffed so that proper adjustment could be made and the available manpower fully utilised. This set of statistics is obviously most important at the district level where decisions regarding postings and transfers of teachers are taken. What we find; however, is that this set of statistics is mechanically compiled and sent to the Government of India whereas the officers at the other levels, namely, the state government, the Directorate of Education or the district, do not take any notice of what these statistics reveal.

In brief, the main point that I want to make is this: we should have different sets of statistics meant for different levels where policy decisions are taken. It is true that a large bulk of statistics would be common for all levels. But there would also be several sets of statistics which would differ from level to level. It would be desirable if we can identify the levels at which decisions are taken and ask a question to ourselves: What are the types of decisions taken at each level and what are the types of statistics which will help us in taking these decisions? On the basis of the answers to these questions, the statistics needed at each level could be separately identified and collected.

#### ELIMINATION OF INTERMEDIATE STAGES OF DATA COLLECTION TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE

The second point which I want to raise refers to the intermediate stages of data collection. My principal thesis is that the fewer these stages, the quicker is the pace of data collection. Let me illustrate.

All statistics originate from some institution which is the basic unit. It may be a primary school, an elementary school, a secondary school, a university or a technical institution. One, therefore, begins the collection of his statistics with the institution and then goes up till the highest point is reached. In practice, between the basic unit of the institution and the highest point, there are a number of stages, sometimes as many as four or five. Each stage means delay, difficulties and problems. Consequently, the more the stages, the more delayed are the statistics.

In India, for instance, the collection of statistics about elementary schools has the following stages:

*First Stage:* The statistics are collected by the elementary school itself.

*Second Stage:* The Inspector of elementary schools (who has about 40 to 50 schools in his charge) collects information about all elementary schools for which he is responsible and prepares a consolidated statement.

*Third Stage:* The District level. All statistics sent by Inspector of schools are received at the level and tabulations for the district as a whole are prepared.

*Fourth Stage:* The state level. From the districts the statistics go up to the State level where they are tabulated for the district and the state, viz., the division or a group of districts.

*Fifth Stage:* Government of India. Here the statistics from the states are received, tabulated and statistics for the country as a whole are prepared.

At each of the intermediate stages, there is delay. The Inspector cannot send his statistics until every school under him has given its data. Similarly, the district cannot collect its data because the district cannot compile its statistics until every Inspector has given his data. At the state level, the Director of Education cannot collect his statistics until every district has given its data. And, at New Delhi, the statistics cannot be compiled for India as a whole until every state has given its data. Thus, the weakest and the slowest unit determines the time factor at each of these stages. The result is that by the time the statistics are compiled in Delhi, a time-lag of about four years intervenes from the date on which they were collected at the level of the institution.

The answer to a situation of this type is obvious. We must reduce the number of these intermediate stages as much as possible. Let me illustrate what happens when this is done.

There are about 40,000 secondary schools in India and about 150 schools in each district. There are two different methods for collecting statistics about secondary schools. In some States, the secondary schools send their statistics to the district where they are first tabulated and then sent to the Director of Education. In some other states, a different practice is adopted, under which all secondary schools send their statistics direct to the Director of Education who tabulates them according to districts and gives the necessary data to the districts themselves. It is seen that in the first method, it takes about two years to compile this data. In the second method, they are compiled in less than a year. This illustrates my point.

I would, therefore, say this:

- 1) Our statistics will have to be collected, as the first step, at the institutional level.
- 2) The next stage in the programme of collector should be decided carefully. It should be a stage where a sufficiently

large number of institutions can be dealt with and from where a scrutiny, collection and finalisation of the statistics, in consultation with the school, can be most easily done.

- 3) The next stage, then, should be as high as possible.

In other words, I would not like any set of statistics to be collected at more than three stages so that between the institutional statistics and the statistics at the top level, there is only one intermediary stage at the most. If even this could be eliminated, It would be better.

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### ORGANISATION OF STATISTICS

Let me now come to the third general point I want to raise, viz., organisation of statistics.

In the collection of statistics, we are always faced with a dilemma. On the one side, we want more and more information. We also want it more and more quickly. But what happens now is when we ask more questions and call more data, the time required for collection of statistics also increases. In other words, if we want quick statistics, we must ask only for a limited number. If we want fuller statistics, we will have to wait for a long time. The question is this: Is there any solution to this difficult problem?

I think there is a solution and this is what I want you to consider. We can divide the statistics that we want in a number of groups. For instance, some statistics may be collected every year. Some may be collected every two years or three years. Some may be collected even every five years. A division of the statistics we need according to their frequency will thus help us to get more data without corresponding addition to the work load or the delay.

Alternatively, we may also have different methods of collection. For instance, some statistics may be collected for all institutions. On the other hand, some statistics may be collected for a selected sample, sometimes large, sometimes small. Even this will enable us to get a good deal of additional information without corresponding increase in costs, staffing patterns and the time involved. It is not possible to suggest any specific recommendations in this regard but if the general principle is agreed to, each country can obviously decide the best manner in which its statistics could be organised.

### MECHANISATION OF DATA PROCESSING

I now come to my last point, viz. mechanisation of data processing. In most countries of our region, educational statistics are collected and tabulated manually. Apart from errors involved this becomes a costly and time-consuming process, I think, therefore, a stage has now been reached when the countries of this region will have to consider seriously computerising the collection of educational statistics, or in fact, all their statistics. I need not tell you that computerisation will reduce costs, reduce delays and improve accuracy immensely. In fact, today, a good deal of data that we collect remains untabulated and unutilised. If we want to introduce the computer in the process, it will be possible to tabulate the available data in much greater detail and to make full use of it for purposes of planning and administration.

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## 15

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### Union-State Relations in Education: Their Implications for Educational Administration (1970)

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I propose to discuss, in this brief article, a few problems of educational administration in India in the context of the changing centre-state relations in education.

The Constitution defines the status of education very clearly. According to it, education is essentially a state subject and all educational authority vests in the states, except a few specific powers which have been reserved to the centre. These include central universities, institutions of national importance, coordination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education, scientific research and technical education, welfare of Indian students abroad, and educational relations with other countries. The centre also has some specific responsibilities for the education of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and for the promotion of Hindi, the official language of the Union. Besides, technical and vocational education has been made a concurrent responsibility. The central authority and responsibility for education is thus very limited.

The dominant authority and responsibility of the states in education was somewhat clouded between 1947 and 1967 by three main considerations. The first was the singular situation under which the same political party was in power, both at the centre and in the states. The second was the charismatic leadership of Pandit Nehru and the third was large earmarked grants-in-aid which could be made available by the Government of India, through the Planning Commission, to the state governments for



development of education programmes. These made education largely a concurrent subject in practice. But all these extraneous considerations have now disappeared with the result that we are now called upon to administer education, for the first time, in the literal spirit of the Constitution. This is a situation for which we were not quite well prepared and has, therefore, given rise to some immediate problems. But there is no escape from facing them squarely and solving them in the course of next few years. The sooner we begin to do so, the better.

The administrative aspects of this effort to rebuild Centre-state relations in education within the strict confines of the Constitution will cover three main issues: policy formulation; organisation of administrative services; and financing of education. It is these three issues that I shall now discuss seriatim.

## II

Let me first begin with *policy formulation*. It is obvious that, in this particular field, the centre and the states will have to work together in the larger interests of the nation. Education may be a state subject under the Constitution.

But it will always continue to be a national concern because of its vital role in social and economic development. It is also necessary for the centre to ensure that the different regions of the country march together with a more equal step and that no serious regional imbalances in educational development are created. This necessarily calls for a certain element of central coordination. In formulating educational policy, therefore, the centre will necessarily have to play a more dominant role than what may be strictly justified on a literal interpretation of the Constitution; and the states will have to adjust their policies to some extent, not only in deference to the wishes of the centre, but in deference to the other States as well.

How will the centre and the states work together to decide a common educational policy that is one of the main questions to which educational administration will have to find an answer, especially because the Constitution itself does not provide any machinery for the purpose. Historically, a tool has been fashioned for this purpose in the form of the Central Advisory Board of Education, of which the Education Minister at the centre is the

Chairman and the State Education Ministers, along with a few educationists representing important sectors, are members. This Board was first created in 1935 and since then it has been meeting, ordinarily once a year, to discuss various educational problems and has been making recommendations, both to the Government of India and the state governments. The pertinent question to be examined is whether we can utilise this machinery (with or without changes) or whether it will be desirable to create another machinery instead.

The working of the Central Advisory Board for the last 35 years and especially since 1947 has brought to light certain inherent problems. The first is the magnitude and variety of issues that need discussion between the centre and the states. If all such issues are to be discussed in the Central Advisory Board of Education only, it will have to meet very frequently and spend a good deal of time in each meeting. Since this is not possible, a practice was initiated of creating other organisations, on which both the Government of India and the state governments would be represented, to deal with special issues such as adult education, school textbooks or physical education. While the advantages of this practice are obvious, they also have one disadvantage in the sense that the importance of the Central Advisory Board of Education is reduced in consequence. The problem has often been discussed. Some hold the view that the Central Advisory Board of Education should be the *only* agency for centre-state coordination in policy making and that it may, if necessary, function through a number of Standing Committees dealing with special sectors. Others argue that this will make the Board extremely unmanageable and that it would be desirable to constitute a few other coordinating agencies between the centre and the states for policy making in specified sectors. Probably, what is needed is a balance between both the viewpoints, each of which has some merits. But this golden mean does not seem to have been attained so far and we have generally swayed from one position to another—sometimes creating too many rivals to the Board and sometimes eliminating them altogether.

A second difficulty experienced in practice arises from the nonexistence of a special Secretariat for the Central Advisory Board of Education. The theory is that the entire Ministry of

Education at the centre should function as the Secretariat of the Board. But this is a cumbrous and ineffective procedure with the result that the agenda of the Board meetings gets crowded with all kinds of issues, the necessary papers are not prepared sufficiently in advance and a full use is not often made even of the limited time available. A good secretariat with proper streamlining of procedures is one of the urgent needs of the situation if the Central Advisory Board of Education (or any coordinating machinery between the centre and states for policy formulation) is to function effectively.

Another set of problems now arise from a failure to concentrate on a few basic issues. The tendency in the Central Advisory Board of Education in the past has been to try to cover any and every educational problem with the result that one fails to see the wood for the trees and effectiveness is sacrificed on the altar of comprehensiveness. It would probably be a good policy to make a radical departure from this tradition and to concentrate, in the Central Advisory Board of Education, on a few major educational issues such as improvement of standards, promotion of national integration, relating education to productivity or employment, manner in which cooperation and collaboration between the states and the centre or between the states themselves could be promoted, and resolution of likely conflicts that may arise between the centre and the states or between one state and another.

Yet another set of problems arise from the lack of seriousness with which both the centre and the state government sometimes look at the recommendations of the Board. One very often comes across unanimous resolutions of the Board which were adopted with great enthusiasm but which, later on, were not implemented at all or implemented too indifferently. This is partly the result of the circumstances already described. If there are too many resolutions on all kinds of subjects from the least important to the most fundamental, the significance of the programme as a whole is lost and the baby often gets thrown out with the bath water. But this is also due to the fact that the centre and the states do not seem to be attaching that significance to this instrument of policy formulation which it deserves.

The steps to be undertaken in the future are obvious. We must not allow the significance of the Central Advisory Board of Education to go down and ensure that we do not create too many rivals to it in an attempt to take off some legitimate load from its shoulders. A wholetime Secretariat, efficient and committed, will be another major improvement. A self-denying resolution under which the Board could limit its discussions to a few issues of fundamental importance is urgently called for and there is a need, for the centre as well as the states, to ensure that the Board is treated with proper respect and that its recommendations are duly implemented. This is not constitutional 'concurrency' which would authorise the centre to legislate on education. But it is the equally important programme of developing educational policies through mutual discussions. It may even be called 'concurrency' or joint endeavour in policy formulation.

### III

The second aspect I would like to discuss is that of administrative services. During the British period, two models of educational services were evolved. In the first model, which operated from 1855 to 1897, each province had its own educational service but there was no educational service at the centre. It was not then possible for an officer of one State to go to work in other States or for officers from the States to go and work at the centre. Between 1897 when the Indian Education Service was created to 1947 when the service finally came to an end, the administrative personnel in education consisted of the Indian Education Service (which expanded between 1897 and 1924 and gradually contracted and died out between 1924 and 1947) whose officers occupied the key posts at the centre and in the states and of Provincial Education Services which occupied the lower posts. Since 1947, a third model is created which consists of a small Advisory Service restricted to the Ministry of Education at the centre and a large educational service in each state/union territory. But all these services are water-tight and there is no possibility of any movement from one to the other.

None of these three models will obviously meet our requirements of the future. The pre-1897 model in which there were only State Education Services and no educational service at

the centre is obviously obsolete because the centre cannot discharge its responsibilities in education, explicit or implicit in the Constitution, without an adequate educational service of its own. The post-1897 model of the British period where an Indian Education Service dominated the whole scene is also not possible because the state governments will not now allow such a service to come into existence. Probably, they will be right in doing so. We are, therefore, left only with the third model which now exists and whose main disadvantage is the isolation of each service from one another. Dissatisfied with this arrangement, an attempt was made to go back to the second model and to recreate the IES. But it has not succeeded so far; nor is it likely to succeed in the near future.

Under these circumstances, we have really to make a serious effort to evolve a fourth model which will eliminate or at least minimise the disadvantages of the existing situation. This is possible if an imaginative and unorthodox approach can be adopted. We should strive to build up, in this new pattern, an educational service at the centre which would have two major roles. The first would be to advise the state governments on the formulation and implementation of educational policy. For this purpose, it will have to consist of the best educational leaders available in the country and invited to function within it on a tenure basis. The second would be to administer the Central responsibilities in education for which it will be necessary to build up a small nucleus of a regular service recruited and trained for the purpose. Steps will also have to be taken to ensure that it will be possible for officers of the State Education Departments to work at the centre for specified periods on the usual deputation terms and similar steps will also have to be taken to provide opportunities to officers in the Central Education Service to go out to the field for specified areas to gain practical experience. Provision will also have to be made for contractual arrangements between the centre and the states for exchange or deputation of education officers from the State Services to the centre or viceversa. This looks complicated at first sight. But it is certainly not beyond the administrative talents available in the country to work out a practicable scheme to meet these requirements. If such an effort can be successfully done, we would have built up, at the level of the administrative services, a large measure of

cooperation between the centre and the state educational officers, which will do an immense good for the development of education in the country. I might briefly describe the programme as 'administrative concurrency' and its success will depend upon the quality of leadership provided by the centre through its own educational service.

#### IV

I shall now take up the financial aspects which are so intimately connected with policy formulation and implementation. The Constitution vests the elastic and growing financial resources in the centre so that the state governments will always depend upon grants-in-aid from the Government of India for effective educational development. But no amount of central aid can serve the purpose if simultaneously the initiative and responsibility of the states to raise additional resources to finance educational development is not properly emphasized. What we need, therefore, is a practical partnership between the centre and the states to ensure that the necessary resources for educational development are made available.

The major problem here is whether the grants given by the centre to the states be tied to certain educational objectives or not. The state governments naturally prefer to have grants which are not tied up to any programme, including education. On the other hand, the centre may prefer and in this it has the support of the vast majority of educators to give tied grants for educational development. Thus arises a conflict which has not been satisfactorily resolved so far. In the meanwhile, one thing has happened. The centrally sponsored sector, or the tied grants for educational development, have begun to decline: and if the state governments had their way, they would disappear very soon.

The weakness of the centrally-sponsored sector which the state governments emphasize are readily recognised. There has been a proliferation of schemes in the centrally-sponsored sector. Not all the schemes have an inherent priority of their own. The centrally-sponsored sector has also led to some centralisation and rigidity in the administration of grants. It has also been used to bolster up weak proposals and the distribution of the funds under the programme between the various States has often been

inequitable. This is a serious charge-sheet, no doubt. But the significance of developing the crucial sectors in education through tied central grants is so great that one would prefer to evolve a programme of a centrally-sponsored sector which eliminates these weaknesses rather than abandon it altogether. Not enough thought has been given to this problem. But the future of education will depend upon our ability to develop a programme of tied Central grants for education which will be free from the defects noticed in the past and will, consequently, be acceptable to the State Governments. This may almost be described as 'financial concurrency'.

## V

The main point of my argument is simply this: the Constitution makes education an almost exclusive responsibility of the states and vests little authority in the centre in this field. In the larger national interests, however, it is necessary that problems of education are solved on the basis of a 'working partnership' between the centre and the states. To create such a partnership through an amendment of the Constitution is not possible and may even be undesirable. But it can certainly be created through an imaginative administrative approach, combined with sound professional leadership supported by fairly large financial grants, tied where necessary. It is in this direction that we shall have to strive in the years ahead.

## 16

### Some Perspectives on Non-formal Education (1976)\*

I am grateful to the authorities of the Indian Adult Education Association, and particularly to its President, Dr. Malcolm S. Adishshiah, for inviting me to deliver the Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture this year. It is a great privilege of which I shall always feel proud, especially because I was lucky enough to have known and worked close to Zakirsab for over 25 years. I am not sure, however, that I deserve this honour; and I should be pardoned if what I say is not worthy of the great philosopher and educationist after whom these lectures are named.

I shall speak on Some Perspectives on Non-Formal Education in India. Non-formal education, as you are all aware, is the latest arrival on the Indian educational scene where new arrivals are by no means infrequent. As generally happens in the case of all 'new' arrivals, it is having a mixed reception and has already begun to mean many things to many groups and individuals. In a situation of this type, I thought that it would be an advantage to set down, somewhat comprehensively, the different perspectives on the programme in the Indian situation. This will help to clarify its basic assumptions and concepts, methodologies of organisation, and potentials and limitations.

#### THREE CHANNELS OF EDUCATION

Let me begin with a brief comment on the three channels of education: Formal, Non-Formal and Incidental.

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\*Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture, Mysore, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1976

'Formal' education is easiest to define: it means the education imparted in the formal system of education organised and supported by the state. It is equally easy to define 'incidental' education which means all that one learns as a concomitant of growing up in a society. For instance, a child learns bodily control, language, social etiquette and manners or acquires a value system while growing up in his home. This learning process is continued outside the home as well as in later life when he learns from his contacts with his playmates, peers, friends or co-workers, participates in social activities and programmes, enters upon a career, marries and brings up children, travels, plays or fights. Incidental education is, therefore, entirely dependent on the home and the society which are educational institutions in themselves. But it is not specifically organised like formal education and is just what 'happens' to an individual who lives in a society. 'Non-formal' education is, therefore, to be distinguished from formal education on the one hand and incidental education on the other. It differs from formal education in the sense that it takes place outside the formal school system (although this characteristic is shared by incidental education as well). It also differs from incidental education in that it is organised (which incidental education is not). I am not happy with the word 'non-formal', partly because it is a negative phrase (all negative definitions are always unsatisfactory), and partly because it would even cover incidental education (which also is not formal). But the wisdom of the English language has decided to use the simplified expression 'non-formal education' to stand for a more precise but awkward expression: 'non-formal and non incidental education'. I acquiesce in and accept the usage for the convenience it provides, and especially because I have no better alternative to suggest.

Definitions are a tricky affair; and one is often compelled to modify them even as they are being formulated. I find myself in the same predicament and must warn that these three categories are not totally exclusive of each other. For instance, there could be channels of non-formal education within the formal system itself (e.g., correspondence education or extra mural activities of universities). Sometimes, the formal system utilises the channels of non-formal education to fortify or supplement its own programmes (e.g., use of radio or TV for school education). Moreover, every school is a community of a kind and a good deal

of incidental education always goes on within the school itself. Not infrequently, the school itself becomes a formal community (e.g., a university campus where teachers and students live together) and the incidental education which such a community provides becomes even more important and effective than what happens in its classrooms. Similarly, the line between non-formal education (which is organised but outside the formal school) and incidental education (which is also outside the formal school but unorganised) is not always easy to draw. For instance, the way in which a girl learns home-craft and child-rearing or a son learns the craft of his father, or a young man learns music by becoming the student of a reputed singer, is not just incidental education; there is a strong social tradition behind it which compels it to happen and good deal of organised effort. Such forms of incidental education are, therefore, almost non-formal or semi-formal if we so choose to designate them. But such overlap apart, it is usually no problem to distinguish between formal, non-formal and incidental education and to deal with them as distinct entities.

Before concluding this definitional discussion I would like to clarify two issues. The total educational process which a society needs must include all the three channels of education – formal, non-formal and incidental, and Education of a society, I would prefer to call it 'Education' with a capital 'E' is the total integrated effect of all the three channels, each of which has its own distinctive role to play. I must also emphasize that every individual receives his education in all the three channels; and although the relative quantum and significance of each of these channels in one's life may vary from individual to individual, it is essential for every individual to expose himself to all the three channels for a complete education. In a situation of this type, it is wrong to indulge in the amateurish exercise of denigrating one channel or exalting another. Each channel has its own strengths and weaknesses and its own potential and limitations; and what we should be most concerned with is to make the best use of every channel, socially as well as individually.

#### A BRIEF HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

I began by saying that non-formal education was the latest arrival on the Indian educational scene. What I meant was that Indian

educationists have started talking of non-formal education only very recently. I did not mean that non-formal education was new to India. In fact, both non-formal and incidental education are extremely old and if anything, it is formal education that arrived last on the educational scene in India, as in every other country. To set the perspectives right, therefore, it is essential to take a bird's-eye view of their origin and development.

In the very simple primitive tribal societies that we had in India at the dawn of civilisation, incidental education was the only known or available channel. Children and youth learnt by living and participating in the activities of the home and society. It was not education for living but education through living; and there was no difference between the process of socialisation and education.

Gradually, as the quantum of available knowledge began to increase and the need for specialised skills began to grow some persons began to specialise in certain skills (e.g. men specialised in fighting, fishing, hunting or medicine and women specialised in cooking, agriculture, child-care and mid-wifery). This led to forms of education which stand mid-way between incidental and non-formal education, e.g., individual children or young persons learning essential skills through apprenticeship to a member of the family or some other suitable person outside it. Later on, some regular forms of non-formal education also came to be organised, e.g., a Ghotul for young persons among the Muria Gonds. These were not formal schools but they did certain specific educational functions which neither the home nor the society did. At this stage of development, therefore, the formal school had not yet been born; and education merely consisted of these incidental, semi-non-formal (or early non-formal) channels.\*

Even in the ancient period the society in India grew in size, became more complex, developed a fairly high degree of specialisation, and gathered a considerable amount of knowledge

the rate of growth of which was also accelerated to some extent. There was thus a need to create selected special groups as well as institutions for undertaking the responsibility to preserve, increase and disseminate the accumulated knowledge of the people. The literary castes thus came into existence and the formal school was born and grew slowly to a respectable size. Ancient India was in fact known for its universities which attracted students from all over the world as then known. The same trend continued in the middle ages as well; and when the Muslims came, their own system of formal education was added to the earlier Hindu institutions. By the end of the nineteenth century a formal system of education, mostly supported by the community had come into existence in all parts of the country. Side by side, some changes had taken place in incidental and non-formal system of education as well. The quality of incidental education necessarily depends upon the quality of life in the society; and as society changed to grow to higher levels, incidental education also underwent a corresponding change. The institutions of non-formal education also grew in variety and sophistication over the years. Two of these changes deserve special notice. As the religion-based formal system of higher learning was ascriptive and severely limited in access, the need to spread the message of religion among the masses was keenly felt. This led to the creation of the great oral tradition in India which spread to all the nooks and corners of the country and which, in a mutilated form, survives even to this day. The second was the rise of Akhadas or institutions of physical education and military training which trained young men, irrespective of caste, to a career in the army.

Some aspects of the educational situation at the end of the eighteenth century deserve special notice. The access to the formal system of education was ascriptive, mostly based on birth, and restricted to the literary and priestly castes or classes, well-to-do landlords, moneylenders and traders. The formal schools of higher learning had very limited access and imparted a religion-based education. They conferred no economic or political rewards worth the name; but their students and teachers were highly respected in society. The formal elementary schools were utilitarian, taught the three R's and wherever necessary, the court language, and qualified some of their students for jobs under

\*In fact, in many tribal communities of India, where a school has not yet been established, these are still the only forms of education available; and even where the modern school has been opened, so few tribal children avail themselves of it, that it would be a truism to say that the bulk of the tribal people are educated, even today, through incidental, semi-formal or early non-formal channels. The same would also be true of quite a proportion of children in rural areas who never enter schools.

government or outside where such skills were in demand. Women hardly went to schools and even among men, the percentage of literacy was only about six. With this severe limitation on the coverage of the formal system of education, it goes without saying that most people were educated through non-formal or incidental channels. It must be pointed out, however, that this difference did not place the masses of people at any great disadvantage in comparison with the classes who received formal education. For one thing, the formal system of education had become stagnant while that of non-formal education was still vibrant. The social, economic and political rewards which the formal system offered were not large and the differences in lifestyles of the educated and the uneducated were not very conspicuous. What is even more important, vertical mobility lay, not through the ascriptive channels of formal education, but through the more democratic non-formal channels of military training and a career in the army.

This situation has undergone an unbelievable change during the last 175 years. For instance, a modern system of formal education has been created and has grown to tremendous dimensions. It now has about 700,000 institutions of various types, about 100 million students, a teaching force of more than three million, and a total expenditure of about Rs. 25,000 million. The formal system of elementary education is not very different from that of the eighteenth century. But modern secondary and higher education is totally different from the old indigenous schools of higher learning and has enabled us to contribute to as well as to share all the growing knowledge in the world. It has modernised our elite groups that avail themselves of this education and made them citizens of an international community. It has also enabled us to create a large force of highly trained scientific and technological manpower which ranks third in the world in size and which, apart from helping to modernise our economy and administration, is also helping several other developing countries to modernise themselves. The system has been given a monopoly to certify intellectual achievements and it has become a ladder which helps and ambitious to climb to privilege because it is only through successful performance within it that one can rise to important positions in any walk of life. As its portals have been thrown open to all individuals irrespective of caste, sex or religion, it has also become the most significant channel of vertical

mobility. It may also be stated that, during this period, several new channels of non-formal education have also been developed. For instance, a modern press has been built up in the country, both in English and in the Indian languages. Libraries have been established and are progressively being developed. The radio has now reached every village and a network of TV is being gradually spread. The programmes of agricultural extension and of family planning are examples of modern non-formal channels developed for the masses.

All this is good and commendable no doubt. But the system has several weaknesses as well, both quantitative and qualitative. Among its qualitative weaknesses, mention may be made of its divorce from work and development so that it has no strong relationship either with productivity or with national needs and aspirations. On the quantitative side, the main weakness of the system is that its benefits reach only a minority of the population. Secondary and higher education, which alone enable a person to avail himself of the economic and political rewards which the system provides, are being availed of by only 10 per cent of the age-group 15-25; and of these as many as eight come from the upper 20 per cent of the population and only as few as two come from the lower 80 per cent of the population. The very fact that 60 per cent of the population above the age of 10 is still illiterate shows that even the meager benefits of primary education are available only to a minority. The same is true of the modern channels of non-formal education as well. Press and the library system have no meaning for the illiterate masses. The educational content of the radio is very limited and the TV is still available only to the metropolitan elite. Even agricultural extension mostly benefits the rich farmers.

It is therefore, no surprise that even today, the vast masses of people are still educated through the traditional forms of non-formal and incidental education. It is indeed an eye-opener to find how little has been the impact of the formal system of education on the life of the masses, especially in the rural areas. A survey I conducted from this point of view in a small group of villages showed that the working members of the society had learnt most of the useful skills they had acquired through non-formal and incidental education. For instance, all women had learnt homemaking and child-care outside the schools system; all



agriculturists had learnt their profession by actual doing and the same was true of all artisans such as barbers, tailors, washermen, dais, tanners, carpenters, blacksmiths, or bricklayers. In fact, the only educated people in this community were the government servants and a few well-to-do 'leaders' who exploited the people. The results of this sad situation are obvious. The masses have remained poor, traditional and feudal mainly because they are still being educated through the outdated incidental and non-formal educational channels of the eighteenth century which gives them their value systems, their superstitious beliefs, their limited and often obsolete knowledge and their traditional limited skills. This is why our society, as a whole, is changing so slowly, in spite of the fairly rapid modernisation of the elite groups. A large chasm has thus developed between the well-to-do, modernised elite groups which are the almost exclusive beneficiaries of the modern system of formal education as well as of the modern channels of non-formal education, and the poor and traditional masses who are still receiving their education through the old traditional forms of non-formal and incidental education. This chasm is far wider than that which separated the educated elite from the uneducated masses at the end of the eighteenth century for the simple reason that the economic political and social rewards of the modern educational system are far greater than those of the formal educational system of the eighteenth century and the introduction of modern science and technology has created a tremendous difference between the lifestyles of the well-to-do educated individuals and those of poor, uneducated masses.

#### CHALLENGES FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

It is at this point in our educational development that we have begun to discuss the concept and programmes of non-formal education. The challenges for the system of non-formal education which we propose to evolve over the next few years must, therefore, arise from an analysis of this very situation. Let me, for purposes of today's discussion; mention two of these major challenges.

- 1) Our historical analysis has shown that the central issue in Indian society is the education and standard of living of the masses. There is no problem about the small crust of the ruling classes at the top: they have always had the best of

education, controlled the bulk of the resources of the country and enjoyed social, economic and political privileges. But the masses of this country have always remained poor, unorganised and weak and have been educated almost exclusively through traditional non-formal and incidental channels. If we have to create an egalitarian society, the masses must be educated and organised so that they have their standard of living. This is the basic challenge in national education and development.

- 2) In spite of all its positive features and advantages, the system of formal education also suffers from several major weaknesses. For instance, as mentioned earlier it is divorced from work and development and has grown into a huge monolithic structure with a tremendous inertia and emphasis on rigidity and conformity. It, therefore, resists all attempts at change like a new toy which has recently come into the market. It is a beautiful rectangular box with an electric switch which is turned 'off'. The moment you turn it 'on', musical sounds begin to emerge from the box, its lid opens, a hand comes out, turns the switch 'off' and gets into the box, the lid is closed, the music ceases and we again go back to square one. The transformation of this education system into an elastic and dynamic one, built round work and development, is yet another challenge which we have to face.

A close examination of even these two basic challenges will show that the programmes of non-formal education have an important role to play in educational and social transformation which must go hand in hand. I affirm this because non-formal education can help us to:

- Educate the masses, conscientise and organise them so that they are enabled to improve their standards of living;
- Make work and development the core of the educational process and speed up national progress;
- Extend the benefits of the formal system of education to all the people and especially to those who do not benefit therefrom at present;

- Help to improve the formal system of education itself and make it elastic and dynamic; and
- Assist in raising the level and quality of incidental education as well.

I shall now proceed to discuss each of these programmes in some detail.

#### MODERNISATION OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

When educationists and administrators discuss the problem of developing non-formal education programmes for the masses, I wonder if they realise that the masses have had nothing but non-formal education throughout the centuries. What they need, therefore, is not more non-formal education of the traditional type, but the modernisation of their non-formal education programmes. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, both the formal education system meant for the select few, as well as the non-formal education programmes meant for the masses, were traditional. During the last 175 years, the formal system of education for the select few was thoroughly modernised which has, in its turn, modernised the elite group. On the other hand, the non-formal education programmes meant for the people continue to be traditional and consequently, the masses still continue to live the same traditional life of the old days. What we need therefore, is not just more of any non-formal education, but the large scale development of modern programmes of non-formal education. It is both a qualitative and a quantitative programme and its qualitative aspects are far more significant than the quantitative ones.

The traditional programmes of non-formal education have three main weaknesses. They are intended to continue the status quo and to educate every individual to his status in society. They are also not based on science and technology so that they tend to perpetuate outmoded technologies of the earlier days, obsolete beliefs and superstitions, and resistance to change. Besides, both the teachers and students in these programmes are the illiterate traditional individuals from the masses themselves who perform the task of imparting their knowledge, skills and beliefs to one another. This is therefore, a game where the blind lead the blind. If these programmes are to be modernised, three main changes

must take place. Top begin with, these programmes of non-formal education will have to be developed by persons educated in the formal system who can act as agents of modernisation. Secondly, they must have a large basic content of science and technology. It is science that will help to dispel fear, to eradicate superstition, to inhibit fatalism and to increase self-reliance. It is modern technology that will help the people to increase their productivity and to raise their standard of living. Thirdly, the object of these new programmes is not to train each individual to his own status in society but to conscientise him, to make him aware of himself, of his proper role and status in society, of the entire social reality, and of the manner in which it can be transformed to create a new egalitarian order. It is really education for liberation and not education for perpetuation of bondage. The work and philosophy of Paolo Freire is very relevant in this context. So are the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi who emphasized that political education must be an integral part of the education of adults and that it must give them the wisdom and the courage to fight all injustice and wrongs at any cost through the peaceful and nonviolent methods of satyagraha. These are the new elements that the traditional forms of non-formal education lack and which the modernised form of non-formal education must provide.

#### WORK AND DEVELOPMENT: THE CORE OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

It is equally important to build the modern programmes of non-formal education round work and development. It is unfortunate that our formal system of education was originally intended for the literary castes of India who look down upon manual labour and were never involved in any processes of direct production. Consequently, it was totally divorced from work and this divorce still continues to dominate the system. Mahatma Gandhi highlighted this weakness of the system and pointed out that work and education are integrally related and that education can be best conveyed through the medium of work. This is why he enunciated his scheme of basic education where he tried to introduce work in the formal school system. The problem in non-formal education is somewhat different. Here, we are not required to put work into education (because most of the educands in non-formal education are already working) but to

build education round work (because what these persons need is education which will give a meaning to the work that they are doing and will help to improve their efficiency and earnings). But whether we introduce work in the formal schools system or build education round work in the non-formal education programmes, the basic principle is the same Gandhian maxim: work without education is a mechanical drudgery and education without work is a perpetuation of parasitism, exploitation and violence. All non-formal education programmes must, therefore, be integrally related to some form or other of socially useful productive work.

In the same way, non-formal education must also be integrated with development in the sense that it must involve the people actively in programmes of social and national development. Unfortunately we have taken a managerial view of development so far, i.e., development is something which the people receive passively and which is created for them by some other managerial groups such as the bureaucracy or the voluntary social workers. It is not denied that change agents have a significant role to play in social transformation. But the transformation never takes place until the people themselves are deeply involved in the change process. Modern programmes of non-formal education must, therefore, involve the people themselves actively in bringing about social changes. In fact, their basic aim is to change people rather than deliver some pre-determined targets. They should, therefore, be closely related to all programmes of change and development. In fact, a good motto for non-formal education is education through reconstruction and reconstruction through education. On the one hand, non-formal education accelerates and effectively implements the programmes of development; on the other hand, it is development which provides the materials for non-formal education to grow to its proper stature and to achieve its objectives.

#### EXTENDING THE COVERAGE OF THE FORMAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

I have pointed out that the coverage of the formal system of education is very limited: it excludes all workers by its insistence on full-time attendance; and it also excludes all poor persons who cannot afford the expenditure it involves. Since the costs of formal education are high, we do not have the resources to bring all persons under the formal system of education. It is not also a

question of money only, because formal education, which posits a dichotomy between work and education, can never bring all workers to school or provide life-long education. It is in this predicament that non-formal education has a major role to play. At the preschool stage, it is possible to organise community resources in women, money and materials and to provide non-formal preschool education to a far larger proportion of children than we can ever hope to do on the traditional formal lines. At the elementary stage, non-formal approaches can provide good part-time education to those children who drop out of schools because they are required to work in or outside the family. It can thus reduce wastage and help us to provide universal education to all children in the age-group 6-14 at a cost which we can afford. In the age-group 15-25, only about 10 per cent are enrolled in secondary schools and colleges. The remaining 90 per cent are really the nation and they have no access to any formal education at present. Programmes of non-formal education can involve all of them in achieving personal growth and helping national progress. Among the adults, non-formal education can help to liquidate illiteracy, to provide citizenship education, and to promote national development through personal and group involvement. In short, it is only non-formal education that can help us to surmount the inherent limitations of the formal system and provide lifelong education for all. These programmes are now so well-known and so generally accepted that I need not elaborate them any further.

#### QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENT OF FORMAL EDUCATION

There is a good deal of qualitative improvement needed in formal education. But one does not know how to bring it about. The system has grown to such huge dimensions and has become such a rigid monolithic structure that an immense amount of energy and money is needed to bring about the desired change. We do not seem to have this energy, nor can we afford this cost even now. As time passes, the size and rigidity of the system grows so that the cost and energy required to change the system increases, even as our ability to attempt it appears to become less and less.

Non-formal education, if developed properly and on a large scale, can provide a solution to this intricate problem. The development of modern programmes of non-formal education,

where we start almost from scratch, can be planned on the principles of elasticity and dynamism. In fact, they have no chance of success unless they are so planned. Non-formal education will have to be interesting and useful to the students because we cannot have captive audiences. It will have to be built round work because the educands are mostly workers and it will have to involve its students in development because it is directed to bring about social change. Its methods of teaching will have to be dynamic and its materials significantly produced in the languages of the people. In other words, non-formal education will give us a good opportunity to bring about the desired educational reforms; and it will be possible to bring them about because of the newness and comparatively small scale of the programme in the early years. But once this experience is gained, it can be of immense use in changing the formal education system itself. In 1921, Gandhiji advised teachers and students to leave the official system of education and to establish a national system of education outside it so that eventually, the entire official system could be nationalised. The basic idea was that the movement for the reform of the official education system should begin outside it, and should be developed to such a magnitude, that it can be used to capture and reform the official system itself. This effort did not succeed for several reasons, the principal one being that the national schools were too few to make any tangible impact on the society. But if we learn from the errors of this experiment and develop non-formal education in a big way, there is no doubt that we shall be training the personnel and gaining the valuable experience which will enable us to reform the formal system of education itself in the long run.

#### RAISING THE LEVEL OF INCIDENTAL EDUCATION ITSELF

The level of incidental education depends on that of the society or the home which provides it. For instance the incidental education which a child gets in a city like Delhi is infinitely different that what a child born in the forests of Orissa can have. Similarly, the incidental education which a child of an IAS Officer get at home is vastly different from that of a child born in the family of a landless agricultural labourer in the same place. But incidental education has an important role to play, especially in

the inculcation of values. Its significance is specially great at the preschool stage because it is almost the only education which a child then has, and if the Freudians are to be believed, the basic contours of an individual's personality are already formed when he is about six years old. There is no doubt, therefore, that we must strive to improve the incidental education which the children of the masses get. In this, the programmes of non-formal education of the parents and raising the standard of living of the people will have a major role to play.

#### ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

I have so far described the principal programmes of non-formal education which we must develop in the near future to correct the weaknesses of the formal system of education, to educate and organise the masses and to improve their standard of living, and ultimately to create an egalitarian social order. Before I close, I shall say a few words about the conditions essential for the success of these programmes.

The first is a question of basic philosophy: our faith in the common man of India and his potential. To many a person from the intelligentsia the poor in India appear to be an unnecessary evil, an irrelevance to be thrown out, an inconvenient presence which is better put out of sight and out of mind and a pest that is better not born. No programmes of non-formal education for the masses can grow out of such an attitude. We must, therefore, develop, not only compassion for, but also a faith in the poor man of India. He is really the nation and the future of the country depends more upon him than upon the minority of the educated elite. The more widespread this faith becomes, the greater is the possibility of success in programmes of non-formal education.

The second is a question of status and quality. Non-formal education should not be looked upon as education for other people's children or for people of no significance. It has to be given a status equivalent to that of formal education, if not better. This can happen only if its quality is maintained at the highest level, if proper bridges are built between it and the formal system of education at appropriate points, and the economic, political and social rewards of non-formal education are made comparable to those of the formal system.

The third is a question of scale: modern programmes of non-formal education are meant for the vast majority of our people. They will therefore, have to be developed in a very big way and their coverage would have to be even larger than that of the formal system. Running a few schools or centres, however good, will not serve the purpose; and if an effective dent is to be made on the situation, programmes of non-formal education would have to be developed on a very massive scale.

The fourth is a question of investment. It will not be possible to develop the programmes of non-formal education on the large scale required and to maintain their quality unless the nation is prepared to invest in them on an equally massive scale. It may not be possible to raise all the resources required for non-formal education if the formal system of education is also allowed simultaneously to grow and consume additional resources. In such an eventuality, there should be no hesitation to go slow with the further extension of the formal system of education (because more than 60 per cent of the resources invested therein go down the drain) and to divert the bulk of additional resources available to the development of the programmes of non-formal education.

The fifth and the last question refers to the investment of human resources. Money is never the most important investment in education. What the learners invest therein, a large proportion of their entire life, is a priceless and unparalleled investment. What they get out of it will depend very largely on the extent to which we invest the time of our most talented and committed persons for the development of educational programmes. The success and quality of the programmes of non-formal education will, therefore, ultimately depend upon the extent to which our talented young men and women find it worthwhile to commit themselves to its development in the service of the poor man in India.

These observations mainly show what the proper development of non-formal education needs, and what we should do for it. But let me conclude by referring to one thing which we should not do, viz., to treat it as cavalierly as we have treated all its precursors on the educational scene. Let us not forget that the education of the poor masses of India has been a problem that has engrossed us for nearly a hundred years. From this point of view,

Dadabhai Naoroji put forward, as early as in 1881, a programme of universal primary education of four years duration for all children. We accepted it. We then found it to be too plebeian and decided to provide good education to all children till they reach the age of 14 years. Even this was found to be unsatisfactory and some of us are already talking of amending the Constitution to provide universal education till the age of 16 or even 18 but while our objectives are soaring high on paper, we will not have provided even four years education to all children by 1981 when the Centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji's demand may have to be celebrated. The second programme of mass education, viz., the universal education of adults, was also started very early. In the thirties of this century, people were not ashamed to call it literacy and to talk of liquidation of the illiteracy of the masses. But we soon began to think that mere literacy was not enough, and decided to develop programmes of adult education. Having soon discovered that adult education cannot be divorced from the attempt to bring about social change, we rechristened it as social education; and to familiarise the people with the new terminology, used the expression 'Social (Adult) Education' as a transitional measure. For a time, we also toyed with the concepts of 'functional literacy' and 'fundamental education'. We have now forgotten all this and have suddenly discovered non-formal education; and as a transitional measure, we have already set up a Directorate of Non-Formal (Adult) Education. While I do not doubt the conceptual progress involved in all this transition from 'literacy' to 'non-formal education' I cannot help pointing out that very little has happened on the ground during all these years. That 60 per cent of our people are still illiterate and that their absolute numbers are still increasing.

The programmes of mass education in India be they in the field of universal elementary education or universal adult education, have generally languished in spite of all the talk in their favour and in spite of all the conceptual sophistication achieved. The reason is lack of adequate action: none of these programmes have been supported, throughout all these years, by deep political commitment, investment of adequate resources, and organisation of a mass movement of implement them on an adequate scale. In dealing with this problem, therefore, one does not appear like a mature and responsible adult who sticks to his programme till he

succeeds. On the other hand, one appears like a child who plays with a toy for a while, only to throw it away for another with a good colour, and still later for yet another with a more dazzling colour combination. What is needed is a radical change in these intransient attitudes. The deep-seated and intractable problems of mass poverty, ignorance and ill health cannot be solved unless there is a firm political commitment, a massive investment of resources, and dedicated efforts of the intelligentsia. This is a task for all of us. The intelligentsia as well as the political leadership: and let me hope and pray that, now at least, we would all rise to the occasion.

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## The Search for a National System of Education: The Indian Experience\* (1976)

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For the last seventy years, India has been searching for a national system of education suited to her own unique needs and aspirations. It is a time when one can review her achievements and failures in this quest and indicate some probable future trends.

### THE LEGACY OF THE PAST

As in several other fields, India has a distinguished tradition in education. We believe that the ultimate end of learning (*vidya*) is the liberation of man through true knowledge or development of awareness. The pursuit of learning has thus to be a lifelong concern of each individual, which will succeed only if he cultivates certain values like simplicity of life, non-attachment to material possessions or pleasures, duty without self-involvement, tolerance, reverence for all living things and non-violence. Unfortunately, this tradition was individualist and elitist and no efforts were made to create the social structure necessary to make these ideals possible for all individuals. Consequently, a hierarchical, inequalitarian and dual society evolved, in which formal institutional instruction was available to only a few intellectuals while the bulk of the people received only an informal or incidental education through direct participation in family and social life and through an oral tradition that familiarised them with the great culture of the country. This traditional hard core of ancient wisdom could not, therefore, save the society from collapse when, in the eighteenth century, it came

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\**Prospects*, 1976

in conflict with the materially advanced, well-organised, and better armed societies of the West.

The colonial rulers were, by and large, ignorant of the ancient traditions, contemptuous of their value and utility, and arrogant and complacent enough to assume that the salvation for all mankind could only be sought through their own language, religion, culture and education. They imposed their own model of an industrial capitalist society on the country with the proviso that India should play a secondary role and content itself by providing raw materials to British industry and purchasing its finished products. Consequently, it was inevitable that they should try to establish a pale imitation of their own educational system, suitably geared to the imperial purposes.

The main objective of their educational policy was to create a new class of persons who would be Indians in blood and colour but Englishmen in everything else and who would form an aristocratic, privileged and loyal group to act as interpreters between them and the people at large, they immediately proceeded to create this class by instituting a limited system of formal education with a single-point entry, sequential promotions and full-time instruction by full-time professional teachers. Its basic values were individualism, liberalism and competition and its content was mostly derived from its overriding objective to spread Western knowledge among the people.

It was divided into three stages: the elementary where one learnt a few essential things through an Indian language; secondary where he acquired an adequate mastery over the English language; and university where one was introduced to Western literature, philosophy and science through the medium of English. By and large, science education received a low priority and vocational and technical education was neglected. There was an overemphasis on liberal education in the humanities and on the acquisition of verbal, linguistic skills, and especially on the ability to read, speak and write good English.

The English system nevertheless had the merit of opening schools to girls, who had previously been excluded from formal education and of opening all areas of study to all castes. By far its greatest asset was the patronage of government, so that education became a ladder for the ambitions to climb to privilege:

every educated (male) person either got a job in the government or established himself successfully in some form or lucrative, self-employment such as medicine or law. There was then a channel of vertical mobility for the suppressed social groups.

It must be remembered, however, that these measures were not in any way intended to create an egalitarian society: what was intended was not the abolition of inequality nor the spread of formal education among the masses, but only creation of a new elite in place of the old. The colonial system therefore took no responsibility for universal elementary education and deliberately concentrated on good secondary and higher education for the select few. All these factors enabled the well-to-do classes to strengthen and perpetuate their own privileged position. The colonial rulers also established a number of 'public schools' on the British pattern with the avowed objective of creating a ruling aristocracy of educated people.

#### THE STRUGGLE TO ADAPT THE LEGACY

Although the new elite was the largest beneficiary of the imported system, it could not and did not remain loyal to British rule. As the national sentiment began to grow, dissatisfaction also began to develop against several aspects of British administration, including education. In 1906, for instance, the Indian National Congress passed a resolution saying that a time had arrived for the people all over the country earnestly to take up the question of national education for the both boys and girls and organise a system of education, literacy, scientific and technical, suited to the requirements of the country, on national lines under national control, and directed towards the realisation of the national destiny.

Between 1906 and 1921, this concept of national education was developed further by several national leaders and especially by Mahatma Gandhi. It was urged that the objective of Indian education should be to create a *greater India* and not a lesser England: that the control over education should be exercised by the Indian people; that Indian languages should be developed and adopted as media of education at all stages; that education should be closely linked to work, productivity and social transformation; that programmes of mass education should be developed on a



priority basis; that technical and vocational educational should be developed to promote modernisation of agriculture and development of industry; and that the core of education should be the development of an indigenous research programme and a study of Indian culture, life and problems. Independent national institutions were established to try out these ideas in practice; the demand for the Indian control of education became an integral part of the national struggle for freedom.

Of all these relevant and important issues, the problem of the control of the education system was the easiest and hence the first to be solved. The educational services were almost wholly Indianised by 1947. The task of refining the concept of national education still further has been an almost continuous exercise since 1906; its latest and probably best statement can be seen in the Report of the Education Commission (1964-66). Efforts to solve the more complex and difficult problems of transforming education into a potent instrument of national development, of providing real equality of educational opportunity, and of improving quality and extending coverage, have also been made since 1921 and intensified since 1947. While some of these have succeeded, others have had only indifferent results.

Among the more successful efforts are a broad programme of Indianisation of content, promotion of research and the building up of a large stock of high-level trained manpower. The basic core of education no longer consists of Western knowledge; it is now related to Indian history, culture, problems and aspirations. We are no longer content to be merely at the receiving end of the growth in knowledge but are also anxious, through a large research programme, to make our own contribution to this universal pursuit. The development of science education and of technical and vocational education has received great impetus, especially at the university stage. This has enabled us to build up the third largest stock of trained, high-level scientific manpower in the world, which is increasingly helping several other developing countries also to solve their problems. The Indian languages are being developed and increasingly used for educational and other purposes. Before 1947, the Indian elite formed a small group of second-class citizens in the English-speaking world and its international horizon was limited to the United Kingdom. Today, the Indian elite is much larger in size,

more competent and more self-confident. It has built up wide international contacts and is making a significant contribution in a number of fields on an international level.

The success of educating the elite is unfortunately more than offset by the comparative neglect of mass education. One of the main planks of national education was to provide seven or eight years of good general education for all children in the 6-14 age-group by 1960. Although progress made since independence is commendable – enrolments in classes I-VIII have increased from 16 million (or 25 percent of the 6-14 age-group) in 1947 to 83 million (or 63 percent of the age-group) in 1975 – we are far from realising the goal of universal education, which ought to have been reached long ago. Many more schools will have to be opened to bring a school teaching classes I-VIII within easy walking distance of the home of every child. The rates of non-enrolment are high and of dropouts, higher still. About 20 percent of the children do not enter the school system at all; and of every 100 children that do so, only about forty reach class V and twenty-five class VIII. The dropouts are mostly the children of poor parents who are compelled to work and cannot therefore attend the exclusively full-time elementary schools.

Similar problems face the liquidation of adult illiteracy. The progress of literacy has been slow, partly because no mass campaigns for adult literacy have been organised and partly because the system of exclusive full-time elementary education has been wasteful and ineffective. The 1971 census found that only 47 per cent of the population in the 14-59 age-group was literate. India still has about half the total illiterate adults in the world and their numbers are increasing.

On the qualitative front, the failures are even greater. The educational system still functions on the values of individualism, liberalism and competition and it has not been possible to restructure it with a strong emphasis on social rather than individual objectives. Attempts to introduce work-experience, to link education to productivity, to vocationalise secondary education, or to make social service an integral part of education at all stages have borne only a very limited success.

Education does not have an adequate political content; moral education does not receive emphasis; curricula are often

outmoded and inadequately diversified, signified or relevant; the system of external examination continues to dominate the scene; teacher competence is inadequate, especially at the school stage; teaching methods leave a good deal to be desired and there is still an overemphasis on cramming and rote memorisation; the quality of educational materials is not satisfactory and students are often unable to own even the essential textbooks or to have ready access to them; the school plant and student welfare services and amenities need immense improvements; and above all, the vast majority of institutions are substandard. In fact, there has been a wide gap between the expansion achieved and the sources available; and this has been surmounted by the creation of a dual system, which consists of a small core of quality institutions (to which a reference has already been made) surrounded by a vast penumbra of substandard ones. The most cherished idea of national education, equality of educational opportunity, has not been achieved.

The largest beneficiaries of the educational system are the upper and well-to-do middle classes, especially in urban areas. The masses do not enter the educational system and when they do, they generally drop out at the elementary level. What is worse, the gap between the elite and the masses has become even wider. The creation of a national system of education, with adequate coverage and quality, and based on justice and equality still remains a distant dream. In the meantime, the financial situation has become so serious that additional resources for investment are very difficult to come by; the size of the educational system has become so large that a Herculean effort is needed to place it on the move. The country therefore is in the position of a traveller who, half the way to his destination, discovers that his purse has been stolen and that his car has developed serious engine troubles.

#### TOWARDS A NEW STRATEGY

What should we do under these circumstances to ensure that we do create, as possible, a national system of education which is properly attuned to the needs and aspirations of the people, and which functions as a powerful tool of national development? This is the vital question now causing concern to all serious-minded people in India.

One major point of consensus is that a time has come when the concept of national education itself has to be redefined to suit the present situation and those likely to arise in the next 25 years or so. It is true that the Education Commission (1964-66) made several radical proposals and that it even anticipated a good deal of the thinking that has now become current in the world. But looking back, one does realise that even the proposals of the Education Commission were not so radical as they should have been. It is urgent to review all that has happened in India in the decade, to digest all the revolutionary thinking that has developed elsewhere in the world during the same time, to take into account the likely developments during the next twenty-five years or so, and to prepare a new blueprint for the national system of education and a realistic action programme for its realisation. Education is essentially a state responsibility, and it would probably be good if each state carried out this exercise itself.

More specifically, there is now an emphasis, and quite rightly, on the adoption of a new strategy, based on the following broad principles.

#### CHOICES AT THE SOCIETAL LEVEL

While continuing to talk of the preservation of our ancient cultural values, we have uncritically adopted the model of the consumption-oriented, mass-production-based and highly industrialised Western societies. There are also grave doubts whether this model itself is viable and further, whether it is a proper model to be adopted in a poor country. What is needed therefore is a deliberate decision on the type of society we should strive to create; the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi are very relevant here; society and its educational system are integrally related to each other, and it is the determination of the desired social goals and corresponding social structures that will enable us to determine the goals, value system, content, structure, organisation and such other related issues of the national system of education.

The emphasis in the past has been on the idea of using radical changes in the educational system to stimulate changes in society itself. It is now generally realised that this strategy has not worked in the past and that it is unlikely to succeed in the future. We must

bring about direct social changes through economic and political instruments and strive, side by side, for a radical reconstruction of the educational system.

#### REJECTING THE MONOPOLY OF FORMAL EDUCATION

The present almost exclusive reliance on the formal system of education with its single-point entry, its sequential promotions from class to class and its exclusively full-time courses, has severe limitations. It makes education possible only during a part of one's life and thus divides the lifespan of an individual into two artificial and watertight compartments; a period of all education and no work followed by a period of all work and no education. It covers only the non-working population. It offers neither help nor a second chance to those unfortunate children who miss its narrow doors of admission or who are compelled to step off for social and economic reasons. What is needed therefore is a new system of education which can use all the educational resources of the community, and extend opportunities throughout one's lifetime.

#### EXPANDING THE CONCEPT OF THE TEACHER

Exclusive dependence on professional teachers must also be abandoned. Professionalisation has its undoubted advantages but exclusive dependence on professional services is monopolistic and counter-productive. Professional monopoly tends to increase costs. A stage can be reached at which the teacher himself becomes the worst enemy of education. Even the rich countries have begun to question the absolute validity of exclusive professionalisation and poor countries like India cannot even think of such a model as a solution. We will have to utilise every available teaching resource in the community to reduce costs and to spread education effectively. Local artisans can be used to teach work-experience in schools economically and efficiently; there is also no reason why we cannot make all students teach other students (or non-students) and to impart information or skills which they have themselves acquired.

#### REACHING THE MASSES

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the present system is that its

benefits go, by and large, to the classes in power. In a society like ours, the development of mass education is a priority; this implies an emphasis on seven or eight years of universal education for all children;; non-formal education for all out-of-school youth in the 15-25 age-group; and a large-scale programme of adult education with an emphasis on literacy for all. Another programme of high priority is to strive continuously to discover talent of all types and to make a special effort, through a programme of placements and scholarships, to develop it to the full. However, without any contradiction, the education of talented children must be regarded as a special responsibility of the state and due provision made for it.

But it is the education of the well-to-do that ultimately receives greater attention and more funds. Whenever there is a choice between further or better education of those who have had some, and some education at least of those who have had none, the decision is invariably in favour of the former. There are hidden subsidies in the educational system which mostly reach the well-to-do.

#### A NEW OUTLINE IN SKETCH

Broadly speaking the organisation of the system should be as follows:

- There should be one or two years of pre-school education, either in separate institutions, or as a part of elementary education itself, organised, in every locality, through educated housewives who should be trained and given allowances as part-time teachers.
- Eight years of elementary education should be universal. There should be a system of multiple-entry and provision of part-time education for those who cannot attend full-time.
- Talented students should be enabled to continue through secondary and higher education.
- Three years of secondary education should gradually be made universal. Parallel to general education should be a vocational stream with appropriate bridges to the general stream.

- Higher secondary education and higher education should be provided in full-time institutions with high standards, to which admission is selective, based both on merit and on social justice – making provisions for woman, for students from poor families and for first-generation learners. There should be an emphasis on high standards, on research and on building up proper linkage with the community around.
- Part-time and correspondence courses should be available for all those who cannot continue in full-time education; board and university examinations should be open to private candidates.
- Lastly, a large programme of non-formal education should be developed for all those not in the formal system. The basic aim is to free education from the restrictive confines of the classroom through a diversity of institutions.

#### RADICALISING CONTENT

The problem of the content of education needs a radical approach. So far, the emphasis has been on the individual goals of education and on the acquisition of knowledge; the social objectives of education, learning of skills and cultivation of values have been comparatively ignored. There is an overemphasis on linguistic and verbal skills, much of what is learnt is irrelevant to the immediate environment, and more seriously still education has been by and large divorced from social, political, economic and cultural development. The school and the community must be brought closer together; and political and cultural education must be made an integral part of the system. Education must be closely linked to productivity. A reconstruction of curricula at all stages on the basis of these broad objectives is the most challenging and significant task to which very little attention has been given so far. Needless to say, this reform will have to go hand in hand with a corresponding revolution in the provision of teaching and learning materials, in methods of teaching and evaluation, and in the types of educational technology to be adopted.

#### MANAGING SCARCE RESOURCES

This administrative system should be elastic and dynamic enough

to permit the variety of arrangement already described and in a decentralised manner.

Financing methods must be adopted to reduce unit costs. Linear expansion of the existing system is clearly impossible. Substantial economies can result from using part-time or self-study methods, non-professional teachers, peer teaching, low-cost technology and local materials, and other such innovations.

Even more important is the improvement of non-monetary inputs, like creative planning, efficient implementation, creative planning, efficient implementation, creation of a climate of sustained hard work, improvement in the motivation of students, and so on. Education needs money, and large amounts of money, no doubt; but much could be done by using labour-intensive techniques. We should not hesitate to use conscription or compulsory services to implement some of our large and fundamental programmes in education, like liquidation of adult illiteracy.

#### Motivating Reform

Implementation of educational plans is, of course, far more important than their conception. Our performance in this regard has been far from commendable in the past. Setting the change process into motion depends on identifying and then motivating agents of change. Non-official educators and private educational managements although minor and uncertain sources of educational change can be considered. The leading and most experimental educational institutions are in the private sector; but they are elite in character and their work is not reproducible in the public sector. The teachers who ought to have taken the lead in educational reform have, by and large, shown little initiative or enthusiasm for educational innovations. The record of teachers' organisations has been even more disappointing; the problem needs close attention because one cannot think of a mass movement for radical educational reform without the active involvement of teachers.

Some consider that university students will spearhead a social and educational revolution, but this seems more like a pious hope than a reality. The successful survivors of the system are generally far too occupied with the pursuit of their own careers to think of

such problems. The unsuccessful ones, who do not get 'good' jobs, are an organised group with a high nuisance value which compels all political parties to woo them. But even they have shown little concern with genuine educational reform and agitational politics which they generally adopt does more harm than good to education. While therefore it is a definite advantage to involve students closely in educational reform and to carry them along, it is probably too optimistic to believe that they will provide the necessary leadership to solve these problems.

This leaves us with state and central governments as the agencies of educational reforms. But neither at the central nor at state levels, does education receive adequate priority; more often than not, education portfolios are entrusted to weak political personalities. The same trend continues throughout the system, with state education departments generally among the weakest of all state level departments. By and large, governments have not thrown the weight of their authority behind educational reform. Where they have or when good leadership has been provided, the results have been extraordinary good.

Last but not least, is the role of the political parties. There are only marginal differences between the official statements of the different political parties on education (except on the unfortunate language controversy) and educational issues have never figured prominently in the political arena. The socioeconomic background of the leadership of all parties is very similar, and whichever the party in power, the general neglect of education continues unchanged. All political parties try to win the university students over to their own fields and to build a base among them. But for this single activity which has little to do with educational reform, one cannot help feeling that education is only a small and marginal issue in Indian politics.

The manner of organising movements for educational reform also needs a close examination. One must obviously build up from below, with the school as the basic unit, and start a process of improvement and change through neighbourhood institutional planning and co-operative efforts of the teachers, students and the community. Such efforts can succeed best if we create, side by side a nationwide movement for the creation of the national system of educational and give it full political support. It is wrong to

assume, as we have mostly done in the past, that the radical and far-reaching educational changes can be worked out through the bureaucracy by injecting monetary inputs. They can be implemented only if mass enthusiasm is released, and voluntary co-operation is obtained from all concerned. These are essentially the tasks of sustained mass campaigns organised through political action.

If a large scale programme of radical reforms is to be developed over the next ten years or so, it will be essential to build up a large national movement side by side with an equally large-scale attempt to improve individual institutions and to harness the energies and talents of all the agencies involved, non-official educators, voluntary organisations, teachers, students, communities, state and central governments, and above all, the political leadership, especially of the Indian National Congress. The most crucial are governments and political parties. But if they do not display commitment, provide the leadership, organise and maintain a vigorous movement for radical educational and social reform, no one else will.

In the effort to generate these forces, the programmes of universal elementary education, non-formal education for the 15-25 age-group, and adult education have great relevance and deserve top priority. Moreover, the moral authority of these forces to bring about the desired social and educational reforms will be greatly increased if they can be inspired by a blend of the teaching of Mahatma Gandhi and Karl Marx, and by an appropriate amalgamation of science and technology with our traditional cultural values recommended by Jawaharlal Nehru. The reconstruction of education in India on the broad lines indicated above is a task of great urgency, complexity and significance. As the Education Commission (1964-66) observed:<sup>1</sup>

The Indian situation with its federal constitution (wherein several constituent States are larger than many European nations, its multi-party system of democratic government, its multi-religious and mixed society consisting of highly sophisticated groups who live side by side with primitive ones, its mixed economy includes modern factories as well as traditional agriculture, and its multiplicity of languages, presents such a complex picture that it almost resembles a

miniature world. In India's attempts at national development, the welfare of one-seventh of the world's population is at stake, and the future of democracy and free societies is in the balance. She is heir to an ancient and great civilisation which can make a contribution to human process by striving to create what Acharya Vinobaji has described as the 'age of science and spirituality'. She has to raise herself from her present standards of living which are among the lowest in the world and to take her rightful place in the comity of nations as 'soon' as possible – a task to be accomplished within a generation at the most. Obviously, the solution of these problems makes large demands on us, the Indian people of this generation : we need a clear focus, deeper understanding, collective discipline, hard and sustained work, and dedicated leadership.

It is in the context of this challenge that a move is now afoot to review once more all that has happened in education in India and in the world since the Report of the Education Commission was submitted in 1966, to reformulate a blueprint of the national system of education, and to launch a nationwide movement for its realisation over the next decade (1976-86).

#### REFERENCE

1. *Education and National Development*, Report of the Education Commission (1964-66), para, 1.11, New Delhi, National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1971.

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### An Alternative System of Health Care Services in India: Some General Considerations (1977)\*

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#### THE SEARCH FOR AN ALTERNATIVE

I attach great importance to the word 'alternative' in the theme of this oration. Let me, therefore, explain in some detail what I have in mind.

When we became free, we decided to expand and improve the health services of the country as one part of a comprehensive package of programmes then undertaken to raise the standards of living of the people. Our approach to the problem, however, was rather simplistic. We adopted the western model of health services which, we thought, was ideally suited for our country. It may be pointed out that our doctors were then being trained in institutions which maintained standards comparable to those in England and thus got an automatic right to practice or serve in the UK. The basic emphasis in this model was on the adoption of the latest medical technology developed in the West and to make it available to the people of this country through

- the expansion of the bureaucratic machinery of the medical and public health departments,
- the expansion of the institutions of medical education to train the agents required for the delivery of health care (such as doctors or nurses),

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\* The fourth Sri Lakshmanaswami Mudliar Oration delivered at Sixteenth Annual Conference of the All India Association for the Advancement of Medical Education, at Chandigarh on Saturday, 12, March 1977.

- the creation of the necessary infrastructure needed for the purpose from the big hospitals in metropolitan cities to the primary health centres and dispensaries in rural areas, and
- the indigenous production of the essential drugs and chemicals required.

There is no doubt that we have achieved a good deal during the last 30 years if judged by the targets we thus set before ourselves. There is now a huge Ministry of Health and Family Planning at the Centre and large departments of public health and medical services in the States. The doctor still remains the principal agent of health care and there has inevitably been a concentration on his training. As against 15 medical colleges with an admission capacity of about 1,200 per year in 1947, we now have 106 colleges with an admission capacity of about 12,500 per annum. The standards of training were also 'upgraded' with the abolition of the shorter licentiate course and the introduction of a uniform course of four and half years (after 12 years of schooling) for the first medical degree. The facilities for training other functionaries—whose categories have greatly multiplied—were also increased substantially so that we are not far from the norms proposed by the Bhore Committee.

A huge infrastructure of hospitals, primary health centres and their sub-centres, and dispensaries has also been built up. The pharmaceutical industry has been developed almost from a scratch. It now produces several life saving drugs and its output has increased from about Rs. 10 crores a year in 1947 to about Rs. 105 crores a year at present. There has also been immense progress in the control of communicable diseases such as cholera, malaria and smallpox. That there is considerable improvement in the health status of the people due to all these measures, is established by three main indices, viz., the increase in life expectancy from about 32 years in 1947 to about 52 years at present, the fall in death rate from about 27.4 per thousand in 1947 to about 11.3 per thousand at present, and the decline in infant mortality from about 160 per thousand live births in 1947 to about 125 per thousand live births at present.

Impressive as these achievements are - and we have every right to be proud of them - it is also realised that our failures are even more glaring. For instance, we have found that the present system provides health care services mostly in the urban areas and

for well-to-do people and that it does not reach the poor people in rural areas and urban slums. The funds required to extend these services to these excluded groups will be almost astronomically large and there is no possibility of getting them within the foreseeable future.

There is considerable dissatisfaction about the education of doctors. We are also not sure of what kind of a doctor we need, how to train him, and even more importantly, how to harness him to the service of the rural areas or poor people. The same can be said of other functionaries as well. The infrastructure we have built is also mostly urban and beyond a few pilot experiments—whose value and capability for generalisation are still in question—we do not have clear ideas about the infrastructure and health care delivery agents needed for rural areas. The system is still over-weighted in favour of curative programmes in spite of the clear conviction that, in our present situation, it is the preventive, socioeconomic and educational aspects of health care systems that are the most significant.

What is even more important, we are no longer sure that the western model we adopted is really suited to us, especially as its basic premises are now being challenged in the West itself by thinkers like Ivan Illich. We have also realised that no bureaucracy, however large and efficient, can be a substitute for the active involvement and education of the people in programmes of health improvement. In short, after thirty years of development of health services, we find ourselves in the position of a traveller who sets out on a long journey, and even before he has travelled about three-tenths of the distance to his goal, finds that his purse has been stolen, his car has developed serious trouble and grave doubts have arisen even about the correctness of the route he had decided to follow.

Therefore, I find a qualitative difference in the situation in the last five years. Earlier, the assumption at least was that we are on the right track and that all that was needed was a good deal more of the same thing, and that we would be able to achieve our goals if more funds were provided and the quality of implementation were improved. Today, there is a growing awareness that what we need is not 'more of the same' but something 'qualitatively different'. This is what I mean by the search of an alternative; and the Report of the Srivastava Committee is perhaps the first recognition that some alternative or alternatives are needed. I am



very happy that we have begun to grapple with this basic problem in right earnest. I hope we will continue this effort intensively over the next two years and succeed in evolving a viable alternative, economic, health care policy which can become the core of the Sixth Five Year Plan. All that I aspire to do in this oration, with your kindness and collaboration, is to make some contribution to promote this extremely significant national endeavour.

### THE BASIC ISSUES

Let me preface my detailed and concrete proposals on the subject, which I will discuss in the following section, by a statement of what I consider to be the three basic issues of development in all sectors of our life to which the development of health care systems is no exception.

The first refers to the fundamental question of the type of society we want to create in India. Mahatma Gandhi was convinced that we would have to evolve our own model of such a society in keeping with our traditions, present conditions, needs, and future aspirations. "Let the winds from all corners of the world blow in through the windows of my house", he said, "but I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." He also initiated a dialogue on the kind of society we must create and sustained it throughout his life. But unfortunately that dialogue disappeared with him; and we have almost equated 'modernisation' with 'westernisation' and are content with the introduction of a pale imitation of western models in our country. But social models cannot be so transferred, and even if they are, they will hardly be useful. There is, therefore, no escape from the earnest intellectual exercise of deciding for ourselves the kind of society we would like to have and the model of health care systems that we should build up. In this, we may be guided by the experience of the West (or of the whole world) but not *conditioned* by it.

The second issue refers to the dichotomy between our professed goals which are explicitly stated and to which generous lip sympathy is paid in season and out of season, and the hidden implicit goals which we really pursue. Before independence, we made a number of solemn pledges to the people of India in whose name we fought for political independence, viz., that we shall abolish poverty, ignorance and ill health and raise substantially the standards of living of the masses.

In the euphoria of freedom, we also embodied these assurances in the Constitution whose Preamble commits us to the creation of a new social order based on freedom, equality, justice and dignity of the individual. These, therefore, are our professed goals; and the attainment of independence places our well-to-do educated classes (who now hold all the positions of power surrendered by the British authorities) on trial by challenging them to achieve these objectives. We are also compelled to pay lip sympathy to these goals because we have adopted a system of parliamentary democracy which forces us to solicit the votes of the people and because we find it convenient and easy to do so on these populist slogans. But the achievement of these goals is not an easy thing and it is also not in our immediate self-interest to do so. We therefore, adopt hidden and implied goals of pursuing our own class-interest. This is understandable (but not excusable) because a ruling class rules, first and foremost, for its own benefit and only incidentally for that of others. Thus develops a dichotomy wherein we talk of serving the masses of people, the *Daridranarayana* of India, while in reality we are more busy than ever in aggrandisement for the benefit of our own classes. In fact, we have converted this very dichotomy into a fine art so that, today, the best and the quickest way to become rich and powerful is to follow in the footsteps of the Mahatma and to offer one's life to the service of the *Daridranarayana*. It is necessary that we abandon this double-think and double-talk and devote ourselves in all earnestness to create an egalitarian society in India.

The third issue refers to the first steps and the process through which this egalitarian transformation can be brought about. When it comes to the discussion of an egalitarian and more just international economic order, we lose no time in declaring that no such transformation is possible unless the rich nations first cut down their artificially inflated standards of living (which are not good for them, either) and that we must accept a 'mini-max' philosophy under which no one gets less than what is needed for decent human existence just as no one is allowed to have an affluence beyond a certain level which also degrades. Exactly the same principle applies to the national situation also. But here we want to proceed on the assumption that the maintenance and continuous levelling up of the standards of living of the well-to-do must have the first priority on all development plans and that

the programme of providing even the minimum levels of living for the underprivileged and the poor should be attempted to the extent possible *after* the demands of the well-to-do are first met. The problems of developing countries like India cannot be solved with this approach; and we must be prepared to share poverty with the people and deliberately and voluntarily agree to cut down our conspicuous consumption, our unnecessary expenditure and our affluent 'necessaries' in order that, the poor may have some fair deal. This let me emphasize, is not a policy against the well-to-do classes. In fact, it is the only policy in support of their enlightened self-interest and the larger interests of the country as a whole. What Gandhiji meant by his doctrine of 'trusteeship' was the adoption of this policy by the ruling classes, voluntarily and willingly.

At present, our policies are mainly directed to the borrowing of some western model or the other and to advance the well-being of the well-to-do classes, in spite of all our populist slogans to the contrary. If the three basic shifts in policies discussed here are not made, we shall be continuing the some old class-oriented programmes based on the adoption of wrong technologies, with marginal changes which will deceive none and which will achieve but little in improving the conditions of the deprived groups. It is, therefore, obvious that our search for alternatives in health care systems must be based on these three unexceptionable principles.

#### LINKAGES WITH OTHER SECTORS

No system of health care can be considered in isolation. For instance, the health status of a people at any given time will depend upon several factors such as the following:

- Health care systems are obviously related to concepts of health and disease. For instance, the health care systems in a society which believes that all sickness arises from the wrath of gods or evil spirits will be different from those in a society where illness is held to arise from material causes which need a treatment in tangible, material terms.

Similarly, the health care system in a society which believes in individual responsibility for health through proper exercise, regular habits and self-control will be different from that in a society where the individual is allowed every

license and its evil results are attempted to be corrected through medical or other intervention. Similarly, attitudes to pain, ageing or death also determine the nature of health care systems.

- Health care systems also depend upon ecological factors. We need pure and fresh air, good and safe drinking water, adequate drainage and proper disposal of night soil, proper housing and adequate arrangements for immunisation and control of communicable diseases, if illness is to be prevented, and if satisfactory conditions are to be created where one can hold the individual fully responsible for his health.
- Health status and hence health care systems also depend upon social and economic factors such as the organisation of the home and family, equality or otherwise of the sexes, social stratification, general conditions of work and poverty which increases proneness to disease while decreasing the capacity to combat it.
- Health is closely related to nutrition and depends upon such factors as the quality and adequacy of food supplies, dietary habits and concepts and culinary and food preservation practice.
- Health care systems are also obviously related to the technology of medicine and to our knowledge of and ability to deal with the malfunctioning of the body.
- Health is also closely related to the spread of education among the people because an individual understanding of health; his capacity to remain healthy and his ability to deal with illness are all conditional upon the level of his education. The nature of health care system in a society where every individual receives a good basic education will therefore be very different from that in another society where the bulk of the people is illiterate.

Some of these factors fall within the sphere of health services and will be discussed here in some detail. Others like nutrition, poverty or general education of the people are obviously important but fall outside the limited scope of this oration. It is, however, obvious that a good system of health services cannot be built in isolation. It will have to be an integral part of a wider programme to improve the standards of living of the people and

will have to be linked to programmes of abolishing poverty, achieving larger production and better distribution of food (including proper storage and improved dietary and culinary practices), and universal basic education. Family planning will, on the one hand, help the adoption of such an integrated approach, and on the other, it is the adoption of this comprehensive approach that will facilitate and promote a good programme of family planning.

No single individual can be expected to produce an alternative plan for the health care systems of our country. This is essentially an institutional and group task. I am, therefore, sure that you do not expect me to place such a plan before you. But you would be justified in expecting that I would at least place before you a few broad principles on which the alternative plans should be based and that I at least initiate a dialogue on the basis of which the preparation of such a plan (or plans) can be undertaken by appropriate groups and agencies in due course. It is precisely this that I shall attempt to do in the limited time at my disposal and place a ten-point programme before you for detailed examination.

- 1) *Target Groups:* My first proposal in this context is that we should state, beyond any shadow of doubt, who the beneficiaries of these alternative systems of health care will be. We should also ensure that these proposed systems will not be so implemented that their benefits again go to those very groups who receive the lion's share of health care under the existing system.

Our developmental experience in the last thirty years shows that we have often gone wrong on both these counts. Several of our schemes of production (e.g. coca cola, canned or ready-made foods, cosmetics, automobiles, cigarettes or superfine cloth) were meant to produce not the essential basic consumer goods required by the masses but the luxury and semi-luxury goods needed by the well-to-do classes. The largest beneficiaries of the development of science and technology and of our industrial development based on the concept of import-substitution, have, therefore, been the middle and the upper classes and not the masses of the people. On the other hand, several schemes which were originally planned with the object of

helping the poor and deprived groups were so distorted in implementation that their benefits also went to the well-to-do. For instance, many a scheme of helping the Adivasis or landless labourers through employment or subsidies resulted merely in passing funds to the moneylender or rich peasant who exploited the Adivasi or landless labourer. The fishing industry in Kerala developed with Norwegian collaboration was originally intended to improve the diets of poor fishermen. But when it adopted high technology, it naturally wished to make adequate profits and with this objective in view, it concentrated on catching prawns. While these prawns continued to be eaten in Tokyo, Paris, London, Bombay, or Delhi and the industry made huge profits, the diet of the poor fishermen (whom the scheme was to benefit) continued to be the same or even became worse.

Such distortions were found within the health care services as well. If contributory health insurance schemes were to be introduced on a selective basis, the Central Government Employees are certainly not the most eligible group of citizens to be covered first under the scheme which involves a heavy subsidy. Even within the scheme, the per capita expenditure on the senior officers (deputy-secretary and above) is much larger than that on the class IV employees. The same can be said of all the infrastructure of big hospitals and super-specialties which benefit largely the well-to-do. We expanded the facilities for the training of doctors on the plea that they are needed for rural areas. But our actual experience is that the majority of the doctors we train go abroad or settle down in urban areas. The trained A.N.M. attached to the Community Development Block was meant to help the poor families. But she has actually become handmaiden to the rich and powerful rural elite. Similarly, several schemes meant specifically for rural areas and the poorer people have made no headway in practice. For instance, the programme of training village *Dais* has continued to languish; and as Professor Banerji points out in his admirable booklet on *Formulating an Alternative Rural Health Care System for India* (pp. 7-8) "In 1963, a Government of India Committee recommended that rural populations may be provided integrated health

and family planning services through male and female multipurpose workers. But the clash of interests of malaria and family planning campaigns soon led to the reversion to unipurpose workers.<sup>1</sup> In 1973, yet another committee revived the idea of providing integrated health and family planning services through multipurpose workers.<sup>2</sup> This time also the prospect of effective implementation of the scheme does not appear to be very bright. Earlier, there had been at least two more efforts, both similarly abortive, to develop alternative health strategies. One, the so-called Master Plan of Health Services envisaged (in 1970) more incentives, physicians establishment of 25-bed hospitals and use of mobile dispensaries for remote and difficult rural areas.<sup>3</sup> The other, apparently inspired by the institution of Barefoot Doctors of China, was to mobilise an estimated 200,000 Registered Medical Practitioners of different systems of medicine as "Peasant Physicians" to serve as rural health workers."<sup>4</sup>

During the British period, our health care systems were based on the idea of making modern medical and health technology available to a class of people who were well-to-do and mostly urban. In spite of all that we have said to the contrary, the same policy has been continued substantially during the last thirty years. Even today, about 70 per cent, of the people do not have access to even the most elementary health care services. This cannot be allowed to continue; and one acid test of all proposals for alternatives should be that they should really benefit, in planning, as well as in implementation, the poor and deprived people living in rural areas or urban slums. The talisman that Gandhiji suggested is very relevant in this context; whenever one has to decide the priority or desirability of a plan, one must always relate it to the extent to which it will actually benefit the poorest and the lowliest of the low.

- 2) *Emphasis on Preventive and Protective Aspects:* My second proposal is that the new health care systems we propose to develop as alternatives should move away from the overemphasis which the existing systems place on mere curative measures and must place; a much greater

emphasis on preventive and protective measures to which a large bulk of the available resources should be devoted. For instance, our achievements in making better nutrition available to the people are by no means impressive; and even today, very large sections of people go without adequate food. It is true that the total available food supply has increased. But the production of coarse food grains, on which the poor people mostly live, has not kept pace with the increase in the numbers of the poor. We have hardly any system of public food distribution in rural areas (outside Kerala). Nor have we made any sizeable impact on the capacity of the poor to buy food in the market. Provision of protected water supply has been made for four-fifths of the urban population but nearly 120,000 villages with a population of more than 60 million people do not still have even the most elementary water-supply system. Sewerage exists only for 40 per cent of the urban population. Most medium and small towns have no sewerage systems and in the rural areas, the programmes of drainage and sewerage are nowhere in sight. It is true that considerable progress has been made in the control of cholera, smallpox and malaria. These gains need to be conserved and developed further. But the prevalence of infections in general and intestinal infections in particular is still large; and in several areas, a vicious circle has already been established; infection leading to malnutrition and malnutrition in its turn leading to increased proneness to infection. It may be asserted without fear of contradiction that under the present conditions in India, protective and preventive measures are even more important than curative ones. The alternative plans we propose to develop must, therefore, lay a greater emphasis on them.

- 3) *Choice of Technology:* The third basic issue in which the alternative plans blaze a new trail is that of health and medical technology. The policy adopted so far, and this is true of all spheres of life including health, has been to consider technology as sacrosanct and above all laws. We have always tried to introduce in India the most highly developed technology the world has discovered on the assumption that our people should have nothing less than

the absolutely first-rate available anywhere else in the world. As the overriding principles in the choice of technology are its modernity and advanced character (and not suitability to the people), we generally expect the people to adjust themselves to technology rather than the other way round. These policies, I am sorry to say, have been proved to be wrong and counter-productive. It is now universally agreed that technology cannot be an end in itself. It can only be a means to an end, viz., the welfare and growth of the people so that we must choose a technology best suited to the interests of the people and not expect the people to adjust themselves to the technology. Secondly, we have now learnt that the choice of technology is extremely crucial because it affects priorities, target groups, investment levels, and the character of the delivery agents. A higher level of technology requires a larger investment; it needs a more highly trained and sophisticated delivery agent; and its benefits tend to accrue to a smaller and more privileged social group. It is, therefore, our decision to adopt the best health and medical technology available in the world that has led to the creation of the present system of health care services in the country, oriented to the well-to-do classes and which is in the words of Professor V. Ramalingaswamy, over-centralised, over-expensive, over-professionalised, over-urbanised and over-modified.<sup>5</sup>

The question, therefore, is whether it is always necessary for us to 'soar' upwards in the technological ladder as we have done. That this is not absolutely essential is evident from several important experiments. The Chinese developed a workable system of health care oriented to the people, with the help of barefoot doctors. Cuba did an equally creditable job with unsophisticated personnel. Carl Taylor trained illiterate Muslim women in Noakhali to perform tubectomy. In our own country, Dr. Raj Arole at Jamshed has trained illiterate village women to take care of 70 per cent of the common illnesses of the local community. Dr. C. Gopalan is prepared to train the village teachers for the delivery of curative services for day-to-day illnesses. These illustrations lead to two conclusions. The first is that there are, as Wordsworth has pointed out, two

types of the wise—those that 'soar' upwards to the stars and those that 'roam' far and wide on this our earth. We tried to 'soar' and the Chinese decided to 'roam'. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that this is not really an 'either-or' issue and we must have both types of the wise, those who soar and those who roam, in a proper combination and a fruitful organisation dictated by the needs of the country. This is what the Chinese seem to have done while we decided only to soar.

Secondly, it appears that even high technology lends itself to two kinds of treatment. We can mystify it and restrict its use to only a few highly sophisticated and professionalised individuals. On the other hand, we can demystify it and train even the unsophisticated non-professionals to handle it. The best illustration is that of the agricultural scientists who take pride in demystifying even the highest technology and placing it in the hands of even illiterate farmers. Innovators like Carl Taylor, Raj Arole and Gopalan have shown that this can be done in the field of health services as well. Why can't we have more of the same?

Whatever the decision on this issue may be, let us not forget one significant factor, viz., the type of health care systems we develop will depend upon our choice of technology to be adopted. What we have done in the existing health care systems is that we first introduced, in a few of our metropolitan cities, a technology that existed in London and then tried to spread it to the 'periphery' where the mass of the people live. The attempt has failed and cannot succeed. Can we not instead begin with the local community and with such local technologies as already exist? This can be a real alternative. As Professor Banerji writes:

An obvious framework for suggesting an alternative to the existing approach of "selling" some technology to the people will be to start with the people. This will ensure that technology is harnessed to the requirements of the people, as seen by the people themselves - i.e. technology is subordinated to the people. This alternative enjoins that technology should be taken with the people, rather than people taken with technology by "educating" them.

"Based on their way of life, i.e. on their culture, people in different communities have evolved their own way of dealing with their health problems. This concept forms the starting point, indeed the very foundation of the suggested alternative for immediate action. People on their own, seek out measures to deal with their health problems. Meeting of the felt needs of the people which also happen to be epidemiologically assessed needs receives the top priority in such a framework for an alternative. People should not be 'educated' to discard the measures that they have been adopting unless a convincing case is made to show that taking into account their own perspective of the problems and under the existing conditions of resource constraints, it is possible to have an alternative technology which will yield significantly greater benefits to people in terms of alleviation of the suffering that is caused by a health problem.

"As is the way of life, health behaviour of a community is a dynamic phenomenon; it changes with changes in the epidemiology of the health problems, available knowledge relating to such problems, availability of resources and other such considerations. Therefore, to be based on such a dynamic phenomenon, the alternative for immediate action is required to be correspondingly accommodative."<sup>6</sup>

- 4) *Agents of Health Care*: The fourth issue relates to the nature of the agents we should select and train for health care services.

The tradition in ancient India was that services needed by the people were provided by selected persons within the community itself, who generally worked on a part-time basis and provided their services, either free of charge or at a nominal cost which the people could afford. The village *Dai* is a good example of this pattern. She has survived to this day and is still delivering her services to 95 per cent child births in rural areas. There was thus specialisation without professionalisation. The negative aspect of the situation was that the technology available was crude and did not grow. On the other hand, its positive features were that the services did reach the masses of the people and that their human aspects (which modern professionalism has killed) were superb.

Instead of trying to develop this model by preserving its strength and improving the level of its technology, we decided to ignore it altogether and adopt the Western model of paid and full-time professionals to provide the health services (and other services as well).

The village *Dai* was treated with contempt and was to be replaced by an A.N.M., the village *vaidya* or a *hakim* by a modern doctor, and so on. The main reason for this decision was the belief (and obviously uncritical belief) that the new and modern technology we wanted to introduce could not be taken to the people through these old agents: new wine needs new bottles. The consequences have been disastrous. The new professionals are so costly that we cannot afford to employ enough of them with the result that we provide these services only to a small group of well-to-do people. What is worse, the humane qualities of the old agents are more absent than present in these modern, technically more competent, but mercenary new agents.

The hard choice we have to make is, therefore, clear: Should we go back to the old traditional model, or go ahead with the new model or combine both? We just do not have the resources to provide these modern agents of health to *all* our people. Nor can we totally ignore these modern health agents and their technical competence. We must not, therefore, regard this as an "either-or" issue. We need both the types in an appropriate combination. For instance, we just cannot provide A.N.Ms to *all* the deliveries in rural areas. This is also unnecessary. The village *Dais* must, therefore, be trained and utilised to provide usual antenatal and midwifery services. But they should be trained to detect, and refer in good time, all complicated cases to the PHC or other centres where more highly trained functionaries will deal with them.

What is said of the mid-wifery services here will also apply to other services. Instead of mystifying the services and centering them in the hands of full-time professionals (which only implies that these services will be costlier and limited to a few), we should simplify the services into several components which can be efficiently managed by para-professionals and non-professionals and train people

from within the community to deal with them. This modified form of de-professionalisation is desirable, even if we had the money to provide professional services alone (rich countries which have relied exclusively on fully-paid professionals for basic services have regretted their decision and are trying to go back to the earlier stage) because it is a more humane way of doing things which gives a meaning to the lives of hundreds of workers. When we do not have the resources, there is no alternative to this at all. There need also be no fear that such carefully planned deprofessionalisation will reduce standards. In fact the work of Taylor or Arole shows that it improves standards. That is why I would strongly urge the full implementation of the proposals made by the Srivastava Committee for the training of health agents at the community level from among the community itself. I, therefore, fully support the following proposals made by Prof. Banerji:

Community members may be encouraged to make maximum use of self-care procedures through continued use of various home remedial measures. Services of locally available practitioners of various systems of medicines should be used as a supplement. Another supplementary community resource can be created by providing training to community selected primary health workers, who are specifically drawn from among the weaker sections, who can make available home remedies and remedies from the indigenous and western systems of medicine for meeting the medical care needs. Services of full-time health auxiliaries may be used only to tackle more complicated cases and those which need more specialised care.<sup>7</sup>

Prof. Banerji makes this recommendation for medical care only. But it would apply to all categories of health services.

5) *Infrastructure*: The fifth issue refers to the infrastructure that is needed to deliver health care to the people. Here I would like to highlight five points.

a) The existing infrastructure over-emphasizes the provision of hospitals and specialties and super-specialties. The present trend also is to increase this emphasis. But as we have seen, this only increases costs and tends to benefit the well-to-do few. There is also

evidence to show that a fairly large proportion of hospital beds are actually utilised for cases which need not have been hospitalised. There is no point in adopting a target from Western countries and say that we must have one hospital bed for so many people. This is no indicator of health at all and is not a model that suits us or we should follow. We should encourage a greater use of home for treating illness. The well-to-do may also be free to have private nursing homes if they so desire (it is senseless to control them). But the role of public-supported hospitals should be redefined and de-emphasized. We may even refuse to set up new hospitals in urban areas and use the existing ones for the poorer people (the rich being compelled to go to private nursing homes). In the rural areas and smaller towns, however, small hospitals (or even mobile hospitals) may be encouraged.

- b) The greatest weakness of the present infrastructure is that the area below the PHC is almost blank. Here we need to put in the largest effort. We must adopt the recommendation of the Srivastava Committee that a real primary health centre (or a mini health centre or a sub-centre) should have population of about 5,000 with two paraprofessional workers - one male and one female. They should work in close collaboration with several local health-workers for the community itself. The PHC can then function efficiently as an apex organisation for all these groups at the mini or sub-centres.
- c) The referral services need to be strengthened and streamlined so that every citizen has a reasonably equal opportunity to avail himself of the specialties or super-specialties he may need.
- d) The education programme needs a total overhaul. There should be a Medical and Health Education Commission as recommended by the Srivastava Committee. The training of the basic doctor needs overhauling and its costs reduced. The over-emphasis on post-graduate work needs to be reconsidered. There is absolutely no justification to start any new medical



colleges. In fact, some of the existing ones may be closed or converted to other uses.

- e) Most important of all, we have to create institutions and channels for the training of thousands and thousands of the new health agents we need -the para-professionals and non-professionals. Special emphasis will have to be laid on the use of non-formal channels in those programmes. The status and quality of this training would have to be very high and appropriate bridges will have to be built between the training and the education of the professionals.
- 6) *Drugs*: The adoption of modern health and medical technology also implies the production of modern drugs needed by the technology. A modern pharmaceutical industry is, therefore, an integral part of the modern health care systems.

The progress made by the modern pharmaceutical industry in India can be briefly summarised as follows:

- a) The pharmaceutical industry now produces drugs worth Rs. 450 crores (1975) as against Rs. 10 crores in 1947 — a phenomenal increase of 45 times. It has achieved outstanding results in import substitution and also exports drugs worth about Rs. 25 crores. It has been able to secure collaboration with many advanced countries and has also developed a good research and development programme of its own.
- b) There has been an expansion not only in the quantum of production but in its variety also. The drugs now manufactured by the industry cover a very wide therapeutic spectrum ranging from antibiotic to vitamins.
- (c) The public sector represents 30 per cent of the capital investment in this sector. It also represents 27 per cent in bulk drugs and 7 per cent in formulation.

I would like to highlight three issues here:

- a) In all developed countries, the pharmaceutical industry has become a vested interest in ill-health. It has set up a tremendous propaganda apparatus and uses the

medical men practically as its salesmen. It is this vested interest which leads to a proliferation of drugs (where none is needed), to increasing costs of drugs, to over-medication and to distortion of values. These are dangers of which we should be forewarned. These have already begun to appear in our midst; and we might do well to nip them in the bud.

- b) I feel most irritated by the type of propaganda the drug industry puts up and we uncritically swallow. For instance, a beautiful brochure brought out by the industry emphasizes that the consumption of drugs per head in India is Rs. 7.5 as against Rs. 310 in USA and observes : "The per capita consumption of drugs is a fairly reliable index of the State of development of the health care system judged by this standard, our country has a long way to go in this vital field."<sup>8</sup> One cannot easily accept the view that the increasing consumption of drugs is an indication of better health. I do not also agree that the average Indian is in greater need of drugs than of food. I might also point out that the average citizen in USA spends about Rs. 35 on sleeping pills per year which is more than what we spend on the education of our average citizens. Very probably, we might reach the target of sleeping pills even before we achieve the targets in milk consumption or education.
- c) We need a far more intensive effort to produce the common drugs needed by the people and to make them available at the cheapest prices possible. The present tendency to produce fancy and costly goods for the well-to-do has to be replaced by the mass production and cheap sale of drugs needed by the common man.
- (7) *Involvement of the People*: One unfortunate aspect of the post-independence administration is the over-emphasis on bureaucracy and failure to involve the people intimately in development. From 1921 to 1947, Mahatma Gandhi had mobilised the people and involved them, not only in the national struggle for freedom, but also in several constructive programmes like removal of untouchability or promotion of village industries and handicrafts. If this

tradition could have been continued and intensified in the post-independence period, the story of our development would have been entirely different. But somehow this was never done.

The Government of free India expected only one thing from the people; they should vote them to power every five years. The Congress never built up cadres and never tried to organise mass movements round specific developmental issues and the opposition parties also did not do the effort and they did not also matter. Consequently, the full responsibility for the implementation of development plans was placed on the bureaucracy which increased several-fold in every sector. There is no doubt that the Indian bureaucracy is fairly efficient as bureaucracies in developing countries go. But the basic issue is that no bureaucrat, however large and efficient, can ever succeed in the proper implementation of the national plans of development on its own exclusive responsibility.

Development means making the people aware of their problems and the possible and alternative solutions to them. It also means enabling the people to take decisions, to try out solutions, to evaluate their progress and to modify their strategies, and so on, till the problems are solved. In this process, the bureaucracy certainly has an important role to play. But it has to be a subordinate role and the major task is still to be done by the people themselves through a nation-wide mass movement. While this is essential in every sector of development, it is absolutely necessary in sectors like education and health where progress is to be measured essentially in terms of individual awareness and growth. After all is said and done, health is as much a function of the mind as of the body and no system of health care services can succeed except through the willing and enthusiastic cooperation of the people. This can be secured only through a mass educational movement. Unfortunately, no such movements were ever organised (except to some extent in the control of communicable diseases) so that the health care systems did not really take off the ground in the

proper sense of the term. The continuance of these policies will again lead to the same disastrous consequences. We must, therefore, plan our future programmes only on the basis of mass participation.

- 8) *Educational Aspects*: The necessity for the massive involvement of the people in health care systems is best illustrated with reference to their educational aspects. For instance, it is necessary to educate all the people and every individual without exception - to unlearn the wrong concepts of health and disease, to understand the basic principles of hygiene, to discipline oneself, to learn to practice self-medication to the extent necessary, and to discharge all one's personal responsibilities towards one's own health. The people must also be trained to adopt mature attitudes to ageing, pain and death because it is the superstitions and irrationalities in these matters that form the fertile soil for the growth of most of what is wrong in the present systems.

In this regard, the Indian contribution of the concept of four ashrams is superb. Every one begins his life as a fondled child and then becomes successively a *Brahmachari* or a disciplined student, a *Grihastha* or house-holder when he drinks deep at the spring of life in all its fullness, a *Vanaprasthi* or a retiring and retired person, a *Sanyasi* who renounces the world and contemplates upon God, and finally gets ready to welcome death which becomes, not a terror, but a fulfilment in which the individual merges in the eternal and the absolute. To make every individual realise and practise this concept is equivalent to laying down the spiritual basis of health. That is essentially an educational task which we have to attempt. It is only in this direction that we can get the most effective, permanent and satisfying solutions to the problem of health. Let us not forget that drugs and doctors are mere palliatives and not solutions to the problem of health just as armaments and armies are no solutions to the problem of peace. In fact, there is no purely technological answer to the basic problems in life; and we cannot escape the need to provide spiritual solutions to them. A spiritual basis on the lines

indicated above is, therefore, inescapable for solving the problems of health care systems. Unfortunately we are not even aware of these dimensions of the problem. To create this awareness and to start moving in this direction can be one of the most worth-while alternatives to explore and implement.

- 9) *Pilot Projects*: It is comparatively easy to reach an agreement on the negative conclusion that the existing systems of health care are unsatisfactory. But when it comes to the positive side, viz., development of a new system which would be more in keeping with our national needs and aspirations, it is not possible to reach the same unanimity. In fact, it is wrong to expect such unanimity which is not needed either. It is but natural that several alternatives might be proposed, that many of them would be viable, and that the differences between them may not be resolved by debate alone. It is, therefore, necessary to adopt a pragmatic approach and to allow trial and support several viable alternative that meet certain criteria laid down. One thing must be said, however. Any pilot projects that we may undertake must have an adequate scale, say, a whole district to cover. Very small projects may prove nothing; and even if they do, it will hardly be possible to generalise them.

Last year, the Indian Council of Medical Research organised, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research, a Seminar on Alternative Systems of Health Care, especially for rural areas. A similar seminar was also organised at New Delhi by the All India Association for the Advancement of Medical Education. Between them, very valuable material has been made available about interesting experimental work now being done in several parts of the country. We have thus considerable experience and expertise in the field and a stage has, therefore, been reached when we can plan pilot projects of adequate size and try them in the Sixth Plan. If properly developed, this programme may enable us to solve the problems satisfactorily in the Seventh or Eighth Plan.

- 10) *Expenditure*: The financial aspects of the problem are extremely crucial and our choice of alternatives will depend, not only on their academic value, but on their financial implications as well. Here a few important issues need close examination.

- a) There is no adequate data about existing expenditure on health care systems, their quantum, source, objectives, rate of growth and such other related but important matters. The distribution of this expenditure by different target groups is also not available. Such studies have, therefore, to be taken up on a priority basis.
- b) The existing expenditure on health care systems is inadequate and will have to be increased. From this point of view, we must prepare a perspective of growth over the next 15 years or so and make some realistic assumption for the Sixth Plan Period. We need a definite lobby to ask for a higher priority and a larger allocation for health.
- c) All possible economies must be effected and costs of health services should be brought down. Simultaneously, we should evolve techniques which increase efficiency and make every rupee go a very long way.
- d) We should permit only a limited increase in these aspects of expenditure on health services where the benefit goes to urban or well-to-do people. In fact, the manner in which a part of this expenditure can be transferred to urban communities or the beneficiaries themselves should be explored.
- e) The largest share of additional resource that become available should be set aside for taking the health care systems to rural areas or to the deprived sections.

### *An Appeal*

The ten broad principles enumerated above are, in my view, adequate guidelines to develop an alternative system of health care services for India. But we cannot stop with the mere

enumeration of such principles. If concrete results are to be achieved, we must take two other steps:

- 1) A large nation-wide debate should be promoted on the failure of the existing system of health care services, on the reasons for its failure, and on the general principles and major programmes of the alternative system of health care which we must develop.
- 2) The Association should set up a competent group to prepare a *Draft Sixth Plan of Health Care Services in India* and submit it to the authorities concerned within one year from now. This will help us to clarify our own thinking and will shed new and valuable light on details which generally tend to be ignored. Quite obviously, such a plan will help in mobilising public opinion and influencing official policy.

With all the emphasis at my command, I would appeal to the Association to take up these tasks. The Indian Council of Social Science Research would be happy to provide reasonable financial assistance from its project on 'Alternatives in Development'.

### Feasibility

An important question will certainly be raised in this context: Will such radical alternatives be feasible or practicable in our situation? Is the attempt worth while at all? Will it not mean a waste of resources (which are scarce) and of energy (which can be put to other uses)? These are important issues and need some discussion.

That there are immense difficulties in the development of these programmes is obvious. Among them, I might mention the following:

- a) The existing infrastructure and professional groups have become a big vested interest. It is necessary to make them aware of the issues involved and of the urgent need for alternatives. The most promising aspect of the problem is that there are several persons within the profession itself to extend this awareness of the select few to the profession as a whole and make it a willing and co-operative partner in the programme.

- b) Public opinion has to be educated in favour of these changes. It is our best ally and hope. But the difficulties of doing so are immense, especially in our situation. In particular, we have to get the full moral and political support of the leadership among the weaker sections and deprived groups.
- c) The vested interests of the well-to-do and urban groups who hold the real reins of power would obviously be the biggest hurdle. An appeal should certainly be made to their role of trusteeship and to their enlightened self-interest.

Our instruments to overcome the resistances of the vested interests and the creation of new forces which will support these programmes will be (1) educational propaganda, (2) an appeal to the good and social responsibility of the haves, and (3) strengthening of the demands of the have-nots. The first and the third are probably the most effective measures. The ultimate solution, therefore, lies in generating social and political forces which can take the needed decisions and implement them with determination and vigor. I, therefore, agree with Prof. Banerji that the ultimate decisions in health (as in education) are essentially political.

But where do we go from here? As Prof. C. T. Kurien has pointed out, the situation in India is different from that in the USSR or France. In the USSR, the socioeconomic transformation has already taken place and hence the preparation of appropriate health care plans is easy. In France also, the situation is equally easy because the French people are satisfied with their socioeconomic system and do not want to change it. But we are in a different position. We live in the midst of a hierarchical and egalitarian social order. In spite of all the resistance, we have to prepare alternative plans of development (the usual plans help the status quo) which will help the creation of an egalitarian society and use the plans themselves as instruments of the transformation. This is a difficult but the only possible solution to the problem. Fortunately, it is not beyond a committed band of de-classed intellectuals and the emerging leadership from the masses.

Faced with these realities, I cannot conclude better than with the words of Bhavabhuti who divided all people into three categories : the lowest, the middle, and the highest. He said:

The *lowest* do not begin for sheer fear of failure. The *middle* ones begin but stop as soon as difficulties arise.

The *highest* begin and never abandon, in spite of repeated blows from difficulties, till success is won.

The *problem* exists; we cannot escape it. The *difficulties* are undoubtedly great; we cannot ignore them. The only choice open to us is to decide which of these three categories of Bhavabhuti we shall join, I am afraid each one of us will have to answer the question for himself, with our conscience as the sole witness.\*

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5. It should be noted that a decision to climb upwards in the technology ladder leads exactly to the same results in other fields of life as well. For instance, a bicycle can be used by every one, but the use of faster means of transport continually in order costs, needs more sophisticated personnel and restricts the beneficiaries.
6. D Banerjee; op. cit, pp. 14-18.
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### Educational Reform in India (1978)\*

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#### A SYNOPSIS

Radical changes in Indian Education have been too few and too slow to come about. In fact, the whole history of Indian Education in the modern period falls into two stages:

**1800–1900:** During this period, one radical change in education was carried out, viz., the traditional system of Indian education was replaced by the colonial system.

**1900–1978:** During this period, we decided to bring about another radical change in education, viz., to replace the colonial system by the national system of education. We are still trying to reach this goal, and it would be an achievement even if we do so by the end of the century.

In 1800, the traditional system of education based on religion and shared only by a small minority of the people held the field. It took the British administration nearly 100 years to replace it by the colonial system whose principal object was to educate a class of intermediaries and interpreters between them and the people.

The principal landmarks were four: (1) the decision of Bentinck (1835) to use English as the medium of instruction; (2) the decision of Hardinge (1844) to employ educated people under government; (3) the Despatch of 1854; and (4) the Indian Education Commission (1882). This revolutionary reform was possible because of several factors such as full and enthusiastic support by the Government who found it politically and administratively useful; State patronage to educated persons; and

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\*R.R. Kale Memorial Lecture, 1978

support by the ruling classes in the Indian society itself who were its main beneficiaries and who found the change of great use to rehabilitate themselves in the new social, economic and political order created by the British Rule.

Between 1900 and 1947, we were mainly engaged in trying to get control of the education system. We finally succeeded in this and the principal landmarks were: (1) Association of local bodies with primary education (1884); (2) Dyarchy in the Provinces (1921); (3) Provincial Autonomy (1937); and (4) Independence (1947). We also used this period to plan out the concept and programmes of national education and to establish a few experimental institutions.

After the attainment of independence, the central and the state governments were expected to give the highest priority of education and create a national system of education as early as possible. This has not been done and all that has happened is that the same old colonial system has been expanded immensely with a few changes here and there. It is therefore necessary to review the entire position and to make an intensive effort to create a national system of education as early as possible and at any rate by the end of the century. This will involve:

- a fresh and hard look at all our concepts of national education, some of which have become out of date;
- launching a simultaneous programme of complementary and mutually supporting educational and social reforms;
- initiating a reform movement, both within the system and without;
- co-operation between educational and socio-political workers; and
- organisation of large-scale nationwide movement to create the necessary social ethos.

Even when such major tasks are facing us, it is a pity that we waste our time and resources in 'playing' with education and in carrying out small, peripheral changes which often cancel out one another. This futile and even harmful effort should be given up and we should mobilise all resources, human and material, to build up a well-planned, nationwide, vigorous and sustained effort to create a national system of education suited to the life, needs and aspirations of people.

## EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN INDIA: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

I am very grateful to Prof. V. M. Dandekar for inviting me to deliver the R. R. Kale Memorial Lecture this year. I deem it both an honour and a privilege. I shall, with your permission, use this occasion to share with you some of my thoughts on educational reform in India.

### *Two contradictory views*

When I discuss the problem of educational reform with the members of the public, I generally find that two contradictory sets of views are held.

- 1) One group of people complains about too many and too frequent changes in education. For instance, they complain about frequent transfers of teachers, frequent changes in curricula and the even more frequent changes in textbooks, the recent obsession with the pattern of school and college classes in which all possible permutations and combinations of 10+2+3 are being bandied about, frequent and often arbitrary changes in grant-in-aid codes, a bewildering variety of rules and courses, not only from state to state but from university to university, and so on. In the good old days, they say, what was good enough for one's father was good enough for him; but today, what was good enough for one's eldest son does not seem to be good enough for his younger brother. They also complain that, while in the past, one found a fairly uniform system of education all over the country, today things seem to vary, not only from state to state, but even from one part of the state to another. The main demand put forward by this group is for stability and uniformity to overcome the problems arising from too many and too frequent changes and too many local variations which hurt the increasing mobile population.
- 2) The second group of people complains that the change in education is too little and too slow, that the education system introduced by the British administrators is still basically intact, and that we need an immediate and radical reconstruction of the education or an educational revolution. They also complain about the rigidity of our

system, which is basically uniform in all parts of the country and which does not readily permit variations to suit local conditions and needs. On and whole, therefore, this group makes an exactly opposite demand and asks for a radical reform, elasticity and diversification.

Of course, there is some truth in both these viewpoints; or better still, they represent two different aspects of a common phenomenon which I propose to examine in the historical context.

Three stages in the Major Educational Reform are:

- 1) 1813-1900: This was the period in which the first major reform in modern education was slowly, but steadily and firmly implemented, viz., the traditional educational system was almost wholly replaced by the colonial one.
- 2) 1900-1947: This was a period when the control over the education system gradually passed from the British administration to the Indian people; and Indians did continuous and considerable thinking about the National System of Education they would like to create, and also experimented about their new ideas on a limited scale.
- 3) 1947-1978: This is a period in which we are trying, without much success so far, to create a National System of Education suited to the life, needs and aspiration of the people.

I shall discuss these three periods seriatim.

#### The First Major Reform (1813-1900)

At the opening of the nineteenth century, we had a limited system of formal education consisting of some institutions of higher learning and a much larger number of elementary schools. The Hindu institutions of higher learning (the Tols and Pathashalas) used Sanskrit as the medium of instruction and were open only to the higher castes traditionally authorised to study the *Vedas*. The institutions of higher learning of Muslims (the Madrassahs) used Arabic and Persian as media of instructions and, though mostly used by Muslims, were open to Hindus as well, and many Hindus did study Persian which was a language of the Mughal court. Both categories of institutions were mediaeval in character and basically oriented to the study of religion. Their enrolments were also small, less than one to a thousand of total population.

The elementary schools were comparatively humbler institutions which taught the three R's to those who wanted to learn them and the Muslim makhtabs also taught reading of the *Quran* in addition. The enrolments of even these institutions were not large – about one to five per cent of the total population of children in the age group 5 – 15 and these consisted mostly of the children of the well-to-do social groups and the literary or higher castes. Girls, when they went to school at all, were extremely few; and the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes who lived on the fringe of the society had hardly any access to the system. The vast bulk of the people, therefore, were educated in the incidental and non-formal channels of education which initiated them to the essential vocational skills, introduced them to the traditional social culture, and helped them to adjust themselves to their lonely and unenviable station in life.

The Charter Act of 1813 required the East Indian Company to develop a programme for the education of the Indian people. Faced with this challenge, the officials of the Company had three options:

- a) They could leave the indigenous system of education as it was and merely provide it with state support. This was tried, for instance, when Sanskrit colleges were established at Pune and Varanasi.
- b) They could accept the indigenous system of education as the principal operational instrument but try to improve it by introducing modern knowledge through the Sanskrit medium. This was the view of the Classicist group led by H. T. Prinsep.
- c) They could ignore the indigenous system altogether and create a new system of education which would teach Western literature, philosophy and science through the medium of English. This was the view of the Anglicists led by T. B. Macaulay.

After a short struggle which was unequal from the very start, it was the third group that won the battle in 1835 when Lord William Bentinck made English the language of courts and administration and directed that the grand objective of education was to spread Western knowledge through the medium of English. The popularity of the system, which had the strong



support of enlightened Indian leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was assured when Lord Hardinge promised jobs under government to those who were educated in the new system (1844). The system therefore grew rapidly and under the guidance of policy laid down by the Despatch of 1854 and the Indian Education Commission (1882), entrenched itself fully in the country by 1900. Over the years, this colonial system developed a three-tier pattern which consisted of elementary schools (which generally used the Indian languages as media of instruction), secondary schools (which generally taught English as a second language to begin with and then used it as a medium of instruction), and colleges and universities (which invariably used English as medium of instruction).

This revolutionary reform was possible because of several factors which need mention, viz., full and enthusiastic support by the government who found it politically and administratively useful to create a class of intermediaries and interpreters between them and the people; state patronage to educated persons; and support by the ruling classes in the Indian society itself who were its main beneficiaries and who found the change of great use to rehabilitate themselves in the new social, economic and political order created by the British Rule.

This major educational reform unleashed three major movements which are still in progress, viz., secularisation, democratisation and modernisation. I will briefly refer to each of them.

- a) *Secularisation*: As I said earlier, the traditional education system was essentially religious. But the sheer force of circumstances compelled the new educational system to adopt a secular stance. The decision was not easy. The missionaries who pioneered the educational effort in India wanted the religious character of schools to continue with the substitution of Christianity for Hinduism and Islam. But this was not politically convenient to the government which evolved the doctrine of social and religious neutrality for sheer survival. Nor was government prepared to support the teaching of Hinduism and Islam. Ultimately, a compromise formula was evolved: the schools should be open to all children, irrespective of caste or religion; the government schools should not provide any

religious instruction; the private schools on the other hand, may provide a religious instruction of their choice; shall have the right to withdraw his child from such instruction but any parent who objects to such instruction without withdrawing him from the school itself. For want of a better formulation, this decision continues to hold the field even today and has been embodied in the Constitution.

Within the Hindu fold, this move towards secularisation had one healthy effect. The study of the *Vedas* and Sanskrit had, in the past, been restricted mostly to the Dvija castes. Now this study was thrown open to all the Hindu castes, including the scheduled castes. In course of time, therefore, these so-called lower castes began to study Sanskrit books and sacred literature and have now become teachers in these fields and even priests. This is a great achievement indeed. Unfortunately these studies are losing their popularity, due to the change of socio-economic conditions in the society as a whole. It is a great pity. One however wishes, from a cultural point of view, that these studies should gain momentum among the non-Dvija castes. It would certainly be worthwhile to organise a social movement for the purpose on a continuing basis.

- b) *Democratisation*: The second movement unleashed through this major educational reform was democratisation. The basic assumption of the traditional education system was that formal education is meant only for a few; and in actual practice also, persons belonging only to a certain socio-economic status had access to it. In the new educational system, however, the schools were open to all, irrespective of caste, colour, race, sex or religion. But this major victory had to be won after a prolonged struggle.

The first to enter the fray were girls. In the earlier years, government did not encourage girls' education for fear of offending orthodox public opinion. But Dalhousie's clear orders of 1850 opened out government patronage to girls' schools; and their education spread, first in urban centres and then in rural areas, especially as women teachers became available. It was the girls from the upper and middle classes that came in first and those from the lower classes came in later, the expansion first took place at the

primary level and girls entered secondary and vocational schools, colleges and universities much later. This spread of education helped to raise the age of marriage and to improve their social status; and in their turn, these reforms accelerated the spread of education among women.

The scheduled castes or the so-called untouchables had a more difficult battle to wage. In the beginning, they were not admitted to schools at all for fear that the caste Hindus would boycott a school which admitted the scheduled castes, but a firm decision was taken not to refuse admission to any scheduled castes. This had its desired result and their presence in the school came to be accepted, although grudgingly. Untouchability however still remained, and the scheduled caste students were not even admitted to the premises of the school when it was held in a temple and they were treated as a group within a group and were not allowed to touch or mix with the other students. In spite of these difficulties, the education of the scheduled castes made considerable progress.

Yet another aspect of the democratisation process was that education at all levels began to 'filter' down to different groups who occupied progressively lower positions in the social hierarchy. In the beginning, education was limited in practice to the higher literary castes. But as some individuals from the castes next lower down came into the system and benefited from it, they initiated a movement in their own castes for the further spread of education. When this movement was fairly on the way, it was taken up by some other castes who were still lower down and who took a somewhat longer time to come into the system and to realise its advantages; and so on. Similarly, the movement which was originally restricted mostly to Hindus was gradually picked up by the Muslim community also. By 1900, the order of the spread of education among the people was the advanced Hindu castes, Muslims and the backward Hindu castes.

It must be pointed out however that this process of democratisation was very limited. It did not recognise the right of every child to receive education. It did not include programmes of liquidating illiteracy or providing

compulsory primary education. It did not even include an intensive effort at increasing enrolments on a voluntary basis. In spite of these limitations, this decision to throw the schools open to all children, irrespective of caste, religion, sex, race or colour did constitute the first major step in democratisation and should be welcomed as such.

- c) *Modernisation*: the third movement which this educational reform initiated was that of modernisation. Indians had lost contact with the outside world and had begun to stagnate. English opened a window on the world and enabled them to relate themselves to the world outside. This had a very stimulating effect and led to a cultural renaissance and several social reforms. As Gokhale said, English education liberated the Indian mind from "the thralldom of old world ideas". This renaissance gradually spread to all walks of life and led to a flowering of Indian languages and of the literature in them.

#### From Colonial to Indian Control (1900-1947)

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the Indian people (which only meant the educated upper and middle classes and higher castes) were generally in favour of the new system of education and appreciative of its advantages, by 1900, however, they began to realise that the colonial educational system could not be considered an unmixed blessing, that it had more or less outlived its utility, and that a stage had been reached when its disadvantages rather than its advantages were being felt more acutely. For instance, the colonial rather than liberal aspects of educational policy began to come to the fore; and as time passed, the British rule began to emphasise 'control' of private Indian enterprise in education rather than its development, loyalty to the crown rather than a sense of patriotism (which often came to be described as indiscipline), narrow training for employment under government rather than spread of liberal education as such, and a mere command over English language rather than acquisition of knowledge, skills or values.

While educated Indians were given employment under government to an increasing extent, care was taken to see that all important posts were held only by the trusted Britishers.

Similarly, the secular policy was found to be more negative than positive and the schools did very little to foster a really secular outlook. Nor was any attempt made to foster moral values through appropriate methods. In the same way, the democratisation process was halted because of the continued neglect of mass education and the programme of modernisation suffered because new values suited to modern life did not grow even while the traditional values continued to languish.

The study of English had first stimulated the development of Indian languages. But its continued dominance in administration, trade, commerce, industry and education began to interfere with their further development; and so on. A strong feeling was therefore created that the colonial educational system established in the early nineteenth century had outlived its utility and that the country would not progress further unless another major educational reform was attempted.

It is necessary to draw pointed attention to the main thrust of the second major reform in Indian education. Whereas the first major educational reform was mainly social and cultural and was based on the conflict between the traditional educational system and the modern one with its emphasis on secularisation, democratisation and modernisation, the concept of this second educational reform was mainly political and was based on the conflict between the interests of the colonial administration and the demand for self-rule made by the Indian people. In popular parlance, this may be called the struggle to create a national system of education.

A key note of this movement is probably best contained in the Resolution on National Education adopted by the Indian National Congress in 1906 which said: "A time has now arrived for the people all over the country earnestly to take up the question of national education for both boys and girls, and organise a system of education, literary, scientific and technical, suited to the requirements of the country, on national lines under national control and directed towards the realisation of national destiny." The movement thus initiated was kept up till 1947 and took four main forms: boycott of official school and colleges as an important aspect of political struggle for freedom; defining the concept and working out the programmes of the national system education which the country needed; conduct of a few institutions outside

the official system where experimental work on national education could be undertaken; and struggle to gain control over the official education system.

- 1) *The Boycott Movement*: The boycott movement got a boost whenever the political struggle reached a high pitch as, for instance, in the movement against Bengal partition or the non-cooperation, civil disobedience and quit-India movements. Its main achievements were to focus public and official attention on educational reform.
- 2) *Concept and Programmes of National Education*: A more positive effort made during this period was to clarify the concept and programmes of national education. For instance, the long debate over the subject clarified the following issues amongst others:
  - a) The national education system cannot be a pale imitation of the British education system (as the official system was or tried to be). It had to be newly designed to meet the needs of life and aspirations of the people, and it should help to create, not a lesser England, but a greater India.
  - b) The national education system is an essentially Swadeshi product but not a chauvinistic one, modernisation does not mean losing one's roots or the substitution of the Eastern culture by the Western. It should really mean being more Indian, drawing increased sustenance from our own glorious past, and simultaneously making a synthesis of all that is best in the East and the West. As Gandhiji said: "I would like the winds from all corners of the world to blow in freely through the windows of my house, but I would not like to be blown off my feet by any."
  - c) The national education system must emphasise the values of equality, justice, freedom and dignity of the individual and must strive to cultivate a rational, scientific temper and a secular outlook.
  - d) The national system of education must emphasize the education of people, and especially the two programmes of liquidation of illiteracy and the provision of universal elementary education for all children.

- e) The national education system must emphasize the culture of work, the dignity of manual labour, vocational and professional education which was greatly neglected by the British and an intensive development of science and technology.
- f) The national system of education must reduce the undue importance given to English in the colonial system. In it, the Indian languages must be fully developed and used in administration, courts, competitive examinations, and education. The national link should also be an Indian language (Hindi) and at the international level, we should promote a study, not only of English but also for all other important languages like French, German, Russian, Spanish or Arabic.
- g) The national education system should emphasize a study of Indian culture and the cultivation of moral and spiritual values.

The debate on the subject which raged between 1906 and 1947 and in which veterans like Swami Vivekanand, Rabindranath Tagore, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Zakir Hussain took part is extremely stimulating. It needs to be studied more widely in greater depth.

Before leaving the subject, one point needs to be stressed. In the debate on the national system of education, two issues should have received much greater attention worthy of their significance, the first is the manner in which the forces of secularisation, modernisation and democratisation could be strengthened; and the second is the administrative and financial aspects of the problem dealing with such matters as decentralisation, elasticity and dynamism, freedom to experiment and innovate and general economies and reduction in unit costs which will ensure that a national system of education with adequate coverage and quality can really be created and maintained within the resources available, but unfortunately, they were not studied on an adequate scale; and this did become a major weakness which hampered the implementation of the national system of education to a considerable extent.

- 3) *Experimentation*: During this period, nationalist leaders also established a few experimental institutions of national education like Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Jamia Millia or Vishwa Bharati. They did some useful pioneer work. But their number was too small to make an impact on the formal system.
- 4) *Indian Control*: The programme of getting control over the education system was most emphasized during this period and also fully achieved. A beginning in this direction was made as early as 1884 when Lord Ripon decided to create local bodies and vest them with some authority in primary education. The next step was taken in 1919 when the system of diarchy was introduced in the provinces and the control over certain subjects was transferred to Indian ministers. Under this plan, education was treated as partly all-India, partly reserved, partly transferred with some limitations and partly transferred without limitations. In 1935, under the scheme of Provincial Autonomy, all aspects of education (except a few reserved for the Government of India) were transferred to Indian control. Finally, with the attainment of Independence in 1947, the whole of education came under Indian control and the people were in a position, for the first time in modern history, to direct it towards the realisation of a national destiny.

### Implementing the Second Major Educational Reform (1947– 1978)

What have we done to implement the programmes of national education in the last 30 years and to translate into action the dreams and visions we built up and the promises we gave to the people during the earlier period (1906-47)? This is the one significant question to be asked in the evaluation of educational development in the post-independence period. I am afraid, the answers to this question are far from reassuring.

- 1) First, let us take the approach adopted to solve the problem. In view of the earlier commitments of the national leadership, one would expect that educational reconstruction should have been accorded the highest priority on the attainment of independence, that a Commission to deal with the problem comprehensively should have been appointed without delay, and that the

report of such a Commission should have been implemented in a sustained and vigorous fashion so that a national system of education would have been created in a period of 10-20 years, but somehow this was not done. Education was dealt with in a piecemeal rather than in a comprehensive fashion. A University Education Commission was appointed in 1948 and a Secondary Education Commission in 1952. A Primary Education Commission, however, was never appointed. A commission with comprehensive terms of reference was appointed for the first time in 1964; but its valuable report has remained mostly unimplemented so far.

- 2) Even if one asks a question of priorities, it becomes at once evident that education did not receive adequate inputs of additional funds; and that a large part of the investment made went to waste because of the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the system which we did not try to correct. What is worse, the essential human inputs of hard, sustained and dedicated work by teachers, students and administrators were never adequately made.
- 3) In the same way, programmes of national education which had been accorded very high priority in the earlier debates were also largely neglected. For instance, the problem of liquidation of illiteracy received very scant attention. The programme of providing universal elementary education for all children in the age group 6-14 continued to languish in spite of the self-imposed constitutional directive to complete it in ten years. The scheme of basic education never made any real headway. The importance of English increased rather than decreased; the cause of Hindi actually received a set back; and the Indian languages did not make adequate progress. No effort was made to evolve positive programmes to promote a secular outlook nor to cultivate social, moral and spiritual values. Even experimental institutions of national education received a set back. As they did not think it necessary to remain outside the system after independence, they were given grants-in-aid; and very soon it was found that instead of having an impact on the general system, they lost their own earlier character and become a part of the formal education system itself.

- 4) Under the colonial rule, a dual system of education similar to the one that existed in England had been created in India as well. That is to say, the educational system had a small sector of good private schools (mostly using English as medium) and a few first-rate colleges which were mostly utilised by the small minority of the rich and well-to-do classes, the children of common man on the other hand were required to attend only the government or other private institutions of good quality. It was expected that this dualism would be eliminated altogether. Instead, it actually increased. In fact, the English medium special schools and public schools expanded as never before.
- 5) It was hoped that the small class, mostly educated, which came to power in 1947 would use this opportunity for improving the standards of living of the poor and for educating them. It was, however, found that this did not happen; and the ruling class or classes used their authority shamelessly to strengthen their own position. Or instance, tremendous resources went into the development of secondary and university education which mostly benefited the haves and wherein there was a large element of public subsidies. Standards were improved, at public cost, in certain sectors or categories of educational institutions which were mostly attended by the upper and middle classes while they were allowed to deteriorate in the rest of the system which catered to the needs of the common man.
- 6) In a vast and plural country like ours, we need a policy of decentralisation, promotion of diversity and elasticity, and full freedom to experiment and innovate if, even within the broad framework of a national policy, we are to relate education to the life, needs and aspiration of the people. But our craze for uniformity and centralisation still continues, making the system extremely rigid and inelastic. In this situation where either everybody moves or none moves, the usual result is that nobody moves.
- 7) The processes of secularisation, democratisation and modernisation were initiated by the colonial educational system in the nineteenth century itself. In the national system of education, it was our duty to strengthen them.

But we have paid no adequate attention to this very significant problem (except to the extent expansion, which we have stressed so far, assists in democratisation), either in the debate on the national system of education or in our attempts at educational development in the post-independence period.

This list of failures can be easily multiplied but it is hardly necessary to do so. From what is stated above, it becomes evident that, instead of making a planned, vigorous and sustained effort to create a national system of education as we had promised to the people, we have merely secured a large linear expansion of the colonial system (with, of course, many marginal changes), probably for the simple reason that it benefited us, the ruling classes. Consequently the task of creating a national system of education to which we pledged ourselves as early as in 1906 is still unfinished, even after thirty years of independence, this shows that basic changes in Indian education are too few, too slow and too difficult to be brought about.

#### SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

I do not think that this evaluation will be seriously challenged. I shall therefore desist from elaborating it any further. Instead, I would like to discuss why this happened and what we should do to ensure that the situation is radically changed and that we do create a national system of education, of adequate coverage and good quality, at least by the end of the century.

My first suggestion from this point of view is that we must give a fresh and hard look at all our concepts and programmes of national education. As I have said earlier, most of this thinking was done between 1906 and 1947. In spite of the almost continuous churning of educational ideas in the post-independence period through innumerable Committees and Commissions, the basic contours of this thinking still remain the same. Two main sources through which an input of live ideas is made into the reform of an educational system are (1) intensive research and (2) experimentation and innovation. In our country, the first is still in its infancy and the second is more conspicuous by its absence. Probably the best effort ever made in this direction is the Report of the Education Commission (1964-66). But apart

from its weaknesses which are better appreciated at this distance of time, it has also become out of date at present. When one talks of a national system of education, therefore, one tends to repeat old concepts and ideas almost ad museum and seems to have learnt nothing by the events of the last seventy years. This will not serve the purpose we have in view. As the Education Commission itself pointed out: "In the rapidly changing world of today, one thing is certain. Yesterday's educational system will not meet today's and even less so, the need of tomorrow". There is therefore absolutely no escape from preparing a new blue-print for the national system of education, after taking into consideration all our experience of the last 70 years and all the latest thinking on the subject, both in India and in the world.

The formulation of a plan is no doubt important. But it is certainly not the most difficult step in the process, especially for a people who are notorious as 'good planners and bad implementers'. What we need to emphasize most is implementation and that involves detailed attention, both to the processes and to the agents of change.

Regarding the processes of change, I would like to make three points:

- 1) Education is a sub-system of the society; and consequently, educational and social changes have to go together. Unfortunately, our assumption so far has been that it is possible to make a radical change in the educational system even within the existing society and that this educational change will initiate a process which will bring about the desired social change also. Experience has shown that this assumption is not correct and that entrenched social, economic and political forces resist all educational changes they do not like and very often succeed in preventing or slowing them down. We must therefore act on the more legitimate assumption that we can get the best results when we try to bring about simultaneous and complementary social and educational changes that strengthen and support each other.
- 2) Similarly, educational changes are best carried out when pressures in their favour are created simultaneously both within and without the educational system. We must therefore organise massive educational programmes

outside the system; and at the same time, we should also ensure that all progressive forces within the system are stimulated, encouraged and assisted to experiment and to innovate.

- 3) Radical changes in education can be best brought about when there is a strong national movement in their support. Such a movement develops better motivation among the people and the workers, provides a proper setting, creates the needed ethos, and improves the level of performance of all workers. In fact, it would be impossible to think of implementing a large-scale programme of educational transformation without such a movement to support it. Let us not forget that in a vast country like India, with its innumerable complex problems to solve, the scale of the reform movement is a major factor that can contribute to success.

Many a well-meant effort at radical reforms has failed in the past because these factors were not adequately emphasized. We should avoid such mistakes in future.

Regarding the agents of change also, our assumptions of the past need a re-evaluation. In the pre-independence days, there was naturally an emphasis on non-official effort and an under-emphasis on official support which would not have been available any how. In the postindependence period, on the other hand, there has been an overemphasis on the effort of the central and state governments and the bureaucracy who were supposed to do everything that needed to be done. The Education Commission (1964-66) assumed that the radical changes needed in the educational system can be carried out by teachers and students if the necessary lead and support is provided by the central and state governments. Neither of these hopes have been realised. The central and state governments have often played a conservative role and protected mainly the interests of the upper and middle classes whom they really represent. Both teachers and students have also shown a class bias and have not stood firmly in favour of those radical changes which would affect them adversely or help the underprivileged groups. It has, therefore, now become obvious that the radical educational changes which we need can only be brought about, if the people themselves are intimately involved and if the programme is supported by a nationwide

movement to bring about a socio-economic transformation. In other words, the social/political workers and educational workers will have to coordinate their efforts; the former will have to be made more conscious of the need to link their work with programmes of educational reconstruction just as the educational workers will have to be made more appreciative of the social, economic and political implications of their programmes.

If we can mount up a major national effort to formulate a new national policy in education and to implement it in a sustained and vigorous fashion outlined above, there is no doubt that we would be able to create a good system of national education over the next ten years or so, or at any rate before the end of the current century. Even if we can do that, we would have taken a hundred years (1900-2000) to undo the colonial system which itself had been created over hundred years (1800-1900).

#### OBSESSION WITH THE PERIPHERAL CHANGES IN EDUCATION

I have shown how the basic changes in our educational system have been too few and too slow in the last 175 years and thus justified the second of the two views which I stated at the beginning of my lecture. But the first view which holds that changes in education are too many and too frequent is also correct because the 'changes' referred to in this view are the peripheral and not the basic ones; and that leads me to raise the issue: Why are we so obsessed with the idea of bringing about these peripheral changes and waste resources over them when the basic changes are not being attempted with any comparable earnestness? ~

The first answer is psychological. When one is faced with a difficult problem which one cannot solve, there is a general temptation to attempt the easier tasks on the fringe. This does create an atmosphere of activity which is often mistaken for progress and more often than not, has its own political pay-offs.

The second answer is rooted in a peculiar administrative tradition we have developed. All social and educational policies are necessarily longterm; but none of us is content to take an impersonal role and to say that he is implementing a social or a national policy in education which has already been laid down. On the other hand, we take too egoistic a view and would like



to say: "I did this thing which was new or I made these changes in the policy of my predecessor which were wrong." Such attitudes can only lead to peripheral changes inspired by a short-term perspective and the introduction of too many changes several of which would just cancel each other out. Gokhale once said that Queen Victoria sent every Viceroy in India with two specific mandates: (1) the first was that he should clear all the mess done by his predecessor; and (2) the second was that he should also add enough mess of his own in order that his successor also should have adequate work to justify his appointment. Obviously, things were bad enough under this administrative tradition, even when there was only one Viceroy for the whole of India. In education, however the problem gets magnified several times because we have to imagine a situation where this mandate is taken seriously and fully implemented by 31 Education Ministers, as many Education Secretaries, more than 60 Directors of Education, and nearly 600 other executive officers at the district level! The vast doing and undoing that goes on in such a system can only be imagined. Needless to say, much of it is meaningless and even harmful.

Would not one like to pray, in such a situation, that we should have less of this large and often meaningless activity? Of course, yes. But then the only way to achieve this objective is to concentrate all our energies and resources on trying to tackle the basic problem involved in the radical reconstruction of education and society. The sooner we realise this, the better for all concerned.

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### To Begin a Revolution with a Revolution (1978)\*

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#### FOREWORD

A revolution in life and a revolution in education have always to go together, because education is life. An educational revolution could have followed (and should also have done so) when a political revolution in our life took place in 1947, in the form of the attainment of independence. This possibility and its need were stressed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as early as 1948. Speaking at the Educational Conference convened by the Ministry of Education in that year, he said:

Whenever conferences were called in the past to form a plan for education in India, the tendency as a rule was to maintain the existing system with slight modifications. This must not happen now. Great changes have taken place in the country and the educational system must keep pace with them. *The entire basis of education must be revolutionised.*

We did not make the most of this opportunity, to the detriment not only of education but of life itself.

A second chance for this purpose – a very rare occurrence in life has come again : an educational revolution has now to precede a socio-economic revolution in life. We have embarked upon a great adventure of national reconstruction whose objective is to abolish poverty, unemployment and ill-health and to create a new social order based on the dignity of the individual, liberty, equality, and social justice. This revolution will not be possible unless there is a simultaneous educational revolution to create an

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\**The Social Context of Education*, Bombay, 1978

educated and cultured nation imbued with the values essential to such a social order.

The next ten years will decide how we utilise this second chance. If used properly, it can lead us on to the great society whose vision inspired our great leaders and help us claim our rightful place in the comity of nations.

Destiny is ruthless. She generally gives *one* chance for survival and we are indeed very fortunate to have had two. For sheer lack of proper planning and adequate effort, we missed the first. Can we dare miss the second?

#### The Dream of a Dictator–That–Was–Not–To–Be

I am not, Dear Reader, A Habitual Dreamer. On the other hand, I sleep like a log and either do not dream at all or at least never recollect what I have dreamt, very probably because I do most of my “dreaming” when awake. But yesterday I dreamt, for the first time in years, and to be honest about it, I do not know when I shall dream again, if I ever do it at all. And believe me, it was no touch-and-go affair. The dream was so vivid and so moving that on getting up I had some difficulty in convincing myself that I was not awake and that I was, really and truly, “dreaming”. I had, however, to accept the reality and try to forget all about it. But since I did not forget it either and since it kept on recurring again and again, I decided to write about it which I have found is the best way to get out of a haunting memory.

What was remarkable about the dream is a queer contradiction it presented, so queer indeed that I do not know how it could ever have happened at all. I dreamt that I was the dictator of India – God forbid! – and that I was trying to put across a certain programme of educational reconstruction. Now I am so confirmed a democrat and so proud that India has opted for a democratic way of life that I cannot think of a dictator in India; and what is even more important, I am sure that I am not made of that sterner stuff the dictators are moulded from. Apart from its impossibility, therefore, I could not also think of a more unsuitable choice of an individual. And yet there it was, a total fait accompli. On the other hand I would love to rebuild education, not through orders and rigid uniformities the dictators are so fond of – Napoleon, they say, could pull out a watch from his pocket and say what every schoolchild in the French Empire

was doing at the moment – but through persuasion (I so love to talk) and through building up the initiative, the freedom and the creativity of teachers and students. I thus found that I was doing what I loved, in a way that I perfectly hated. But the fact was that I enjoyed it and judging from the reactions of my “dream” people, I also seemed to be doing it well. I have no desire to rush you, dear Reader. You need not take me on trust for both the parts of this statement. Towards the end of this story (assuming that you remain awake and patient enough till then), you may be able to judge the second part for yourself.

My First Recollection is that of a Cabinet session wherein I had called my Secretaries to discuss the plans for implementing a programme of educational reconstruction. They were all there, except for the Education Secretary, who I came to know later had insisted on personally bringing to the meeting a copy of the Report of the Education Commission (with its underlying papers and supplementary volumes) and had literally collapsed under the weight and had to be rushed to the hospital. In the hullabaloo that followed, the copy of the Commission’s Report, which was the only one available, got lost (I cannot say fortunately or unfortunately), and for a minute we did not know what to do. The situation was, however, saved when the Finance Secretary pointed out that, with the Report of the Commission having been thus disposed of, the implementation of the programme<sup>1</sup> need to held up no longer. So we decided to go ahead with the plan. Two other favourable developments which were hailed by all those present also happened simultaneously. All our friends in advanced countries informed us that they would not lend us any “experts” and that they would give us no “aid”, with or without strings. This, the Home Secretary said, was good in every way because with no experts to misguide or confuse us, we were likely to do some sensible things and that, with no money to squander or throw about, we stood a sporting chance of concentrating on the essentials. Anyway, we began under good auguries (like all dictators, I also became a little superstitious in my dream).

After the discussion about implementation had gone on for a while, we soon realised that we were up against two formidable difficulties. The first was that we could not decide *where* to begin, because of the sheer length of the recommendations on

educational reform. My Scientific Secretary told me that if all the educational recommendations in the post-Independence period had been put end to end instead of moving in a circle as they usually did, every student and teacher would have walked up to the moon long ago and forestalled both the USA and the USSR (or is it the other way about?). The second was that every trick known to the world for launching a new programme – national broadcasts, celebrations of national days, issue of special numbers, token implementation by big guns like governors and ministers, and so on – had been so often tried in post-Independence India and made to fail so completely that we could not also decide *how* to begin. For instance, we were all opposed to the idea that this programme should begin like the *Hard Work Campaign* of the government when ministers went to schools to celebrate *Shramdan* days, kept the children waiting for three to five hours by coming late, then made them listen to a long and boring talk which no one understood (and where the poor headmaster came into trouble because, although the children had loyally carried out his commands to clap hands frequently and loudly, the poor innocents had done so at the wrong points) and then declared a holiday in honour of his visit so that it turned out, after all, to be a fairly tolerable holiday. Yes, we all knew the don'ts! My Information Secretary had prepared an elaborate dossier of what we should *not* do by carefully compiling what the Government of India *did* do. But, then, where could we go from there?

Well, to be frank about it, we were just stumped and could not, for the life of us, decide where to begin and how.<sup>2</sup> It was at this point that my wife walked in with the usual tea and cashewnuts. I never knew that dictators liked cashewnuts – that made me feel that they were almost human. And by the way, that's another of my problems. I am not a dreamer, so I can't say much about it. But you folks who dream perhaps know better. I guess menfolk see a lot of women in their dreams; but does one really see one's own wife? Anyway to come back to the point, I was glad that my wife came in because she always has an answer for most of my worries – and that, by the way, is why I married her – and seeing the worried look on my face, asked me what the trouble was; and when I put it to her, she smiled – she has an illuminating smile, you know – and said:

"Silly, why do you worry so much about it? Whom is education meant for?"

"Why, for the uneducated, the illiterate, the unilluminated", I said.

"That's it. A good businessman consults his customers – they are always right (this is the secret behind the American dollar). So why don't you consult your customers? Get together a dozen elderly illiterate men and women and ask for their advice. Never having been to a training college, they will perhaps give you the right advice for educational reconstruction."

That settled it. This was the best advice we had so far; and even if it were not – tell me, can anyone disregard his wife, or what is worse, a dictator's wife? We quickly together nearly two dozen illiterate dumbs – every Secretary present could contribute a servant for the purpose though he had no advice to offer – and we took counsel with them and made up our plans. I will tell you only the plans and not bore you with the details of our long discussions: we were all so used to the learned inanities that fly about in the discussions at the Government of India meeting that one had to make a supreme effort to understand robust commonsense. But I assure you it was worth it, every minute of the time we spent with them.

My main object, I said, was to bring about a revolution in Indian life. And yet all the traditional preparations made to usher in the revolution were so mild, so slow, so evolutionary that they even surpassed the elaborate precautions taken by Bottom the Weaver, while introducing the lion on the stage, to ensure that the ladies were not frightened. The existing programmes were such that they could never have roused anyone to anything and it would have been nothing short of a miracle if revolutions could have been made to creep imperceptibly in like the Five Year Plans in education! My advisers told me that they were not educated, but they certainly knew one thing: an attempt to create a revolution must begin with a bang like the blast of a bomb or a splash created by the dropping of a big stone in a pool of stagnant water and that it must shake everyone up, squarely and fully. This was so obvious a thing that we had never noticed it! One does not easily realise that the sophisticated art of education consists

mainly in blinding people to the obvious, without necessarily enabling them to see the subtle.

Anyway, we decided to begin a revolution with a revolution – as simple as that, as our dear friend Nicholas DeWitt would have said. From this point of view, our first decision was that the current school year should begin on the same day all over India – on 14 November. It was a memorable day, the day a revolution in human form was born in this country, a day that is climatically pleasant everywhere, from Kanyakumari to the Himalayas, from the Rann of Kutch to the Bay of Bengal. This itself was a revolution: the people said that something like this had never happened before in the country. I could not be certain and so I asked my Information Secretary to check up. He said that there was a precedent and that one event, the financial year, always began in all parts of India exactly on the same day, the first of April, which is also distinguished by being the day of all fools, and that this was the one uniformity which the Government of India (of the old Imperial British Variety and *not* the *deshi* one, mind you) in its wisdom had decided to introduce. Anyway, when wise people decide to act like fools, fools like me will be compelled to act like wise men just to be different. What does it matter in a poor country (that is probably an understatement – I should have rather said, in the poorest country in the world) when the “Financial year” begins? We all know too well that the “financial” part of it has never existed and that the “year” part of it is only starvation for 365 days. But an *educational* year in India should begin on the same day throughout the length and breadth of the country! What a tremendous difference it would make for every child to know – and they are not a few, they now form 15 per cent of the population and will soon rise to 24 per cent – that all over India, all children, boys and girls, will begin their studies at the same time and on the same day, a day that is hallowed by the memory of the great one, an inspiring memory that can never die and that now springs up afresh every year, in every flower that blows in the wind, in every grain that ripens in the sun and in every ripple that laughs on the flowing waters of every river! Anyway, we decided to do so and what is probably even more important, actually did it, you know. And by God, shall I take you in confidence? The entire press<sup>3</sup> in the country applauded three features of this decision, features which they said were

conspicuous by their absence in the earlier regime<sup>4</sup>: novelty, quickness, and immediate and firm implementation.

The second decision was equally different and equally revolutionary. All schools and colleges were told that all regular studies should be suspended for six months and that they would have to complete them and pass the examination in the remaining six months of the year only. This was done because we all knew that the curricula were very light, that they did not offer an adequate challenge to the students, and that there would be no educational loss if a period of six months could be carved out from the school year for some other purposes until more appropriate and fuller curricula were prepared and introduced from the next year onwards.

On this point, however, our uneducated advisers were not very happy. They were first of all shocked when we told them that the entire year was meant for study and that students were expected to work from 24 hours to 50 hours a week according to their age. They were under the impression that we send our children to schools to play, to make merry, to roam about and generally to develop all those attitudes of intransigence, superficiality, and laziness that mark the scions of the upper classes. They thought that study was meant for examinations, that it should precede them by about two months – if you do not discover, in the meantime, easier methods of passing them, honest or otherwise. But anyway, we educated them on this subject and they understood our view quickly. In fact, the Secretaries were aghast at the speed of their intake – they said that they had never seen a minister understand a point so quickly and so well! Anyway, it was agreed that all the studies in the first year were to be completed in the second six months only; and everyone felt that this was a generous allowance and that if they had known earlier that dictators could be so considerate, they would have, well, let it go.

Our next problem was to find what to do with the six months we had on our hands. Teachers, students, departmental officers, budget provisions for their salaries, everything was there except one; a programme which, unlike the existing brand of education, had some social purpose in it. So we said that everyone should make a gift of these six months to national service and actively

participate in the creative and joyous task of rebuilding the greater India of our dreams. There was no need for any but some marginal expenditure connected with the programmes; all that we proposed was that the teachers and students should carry on the work of their schools in the normal way and, instead of the usual studies in text-books, develop appropriate programmes of social service in their own areas. Some general guidance was to be given; but they were told that it was for *them* to find out what they could and should do and to do it. National service is like service to God: He never asks for anything. It is for man to find out what he can best offer and offer it.

It was decided that we should address a letter on the subject to all schools. Writing to the State Education Departments was obviously no good because, for quite some time, they had developed a habit of reading only financial sanctions that came from the centre and nothing else. And so we drew up a programme for all educational institutions. I must say that our illiterate advisers were most helpful here. They did not know any theory, nor could they put it in inch-long words but they knew what was what. According to them, a child became a man or woman (and what else can be the object of education) by living in society and participating in all its joys and travails in a normal manner. They could never realise what we gained by withdrawing children from the community and by letting them grow in the artificial hothouses called "schools". That, they said, was one reason why they wisely did not send their children to school – a reason which the educated people were too ignorant to follow. But when we told them that the teachers and children shall jump the classroom walls and that the schools shall be communities in themselves and shall also be brought together in closer contact with their local communities, they were all too jubilant and approving. In fact, they came out with innumerable ideas about how this could be done, and very soon we were able to compile a document addressed to the students and teachers, explaining broadly what they should do during the next six months for offering their services to the nation.

I said "A Document", but that was not quite correct. It was really a series of documents, one for each category of institutions, because we soon found that the programme had to differ from one type of institutions to another according to the age, maturity, and

specialisation of the students. But certain items were common to all. For instance, the entire institution was to meet together at the beginning of the school day and offer a prayer. This was to be followed by a suitable programme of talks, discussions, or supervised reading about national reconstruction arranged to suit the level of the students.<sup>5</sup> Then a certain part of *Shramdan* was obligatory. All cleaning and upkeep of the school building and its campus was to be done by the students and teachers (unless it was proved to be impossible), and all funds provided for it in the budget were to be diverted to the students' welfare fund. The development of the campus, the cleaning and development of village sites or urban slums was also to be taken up, the general understanding being that every student and teacher should offer *Shramdan* for at least three hours a day. A new idea of "homework" was adopted. At present, homework really means school work meant to be done at home by students, parents and private tutors. Our illiterate advisers pointed out that this was a modern educational perversion of a good old custom of children working at home to assist their parents. So we said that "homework" would, in the future, mean the work which children did at home to assist their parents and particularly the mother, and adopted a rule that every child should do "homework" for two hours a day. In order that it might not get ignored, we insisted on a record being maintained in prescribed forms and this record was made an integral part of the requirements for passing.

The steps taken to meet the national food crises were regarded as national service and were obligatory for all. It was explained, for instance, that the overall food deficit of 7 or 8 per cent that we had at present could be made up, almost fully, if *everyone* gave up one meal a week at least and those who could give up two. It was directed that all teachers and students should fast for one night a week at least and that this should be regarded as an integral part of the school work.

A mass campaign for literacy was to be organised and all teachers and students above middle school had to make adults literate in this period of six months by going to their homes to teach them. Students were also expected to read out daily newspapers and explain the news to illiterate people.<sup>6</sup> Teachers and professors were to meet groups of adults and discuss with them the national problems facing us and the way to solve them.

In fact, we soon realised that if we could make each university teacher to meet the illiterate or semi-educated citizens and require him to continue their adult education for a period of six months, the worst resistance to a solution of the problem of the medium of instruction at the university stage would have been overcome and the problem would be solved without any difficulty soon afterwards. Anyway, we insisted that the university should go to the masses and meet them and accept adult education as one of its main functions.

Ostentation was to be banned: everyone had to wear a simple dress. Expenditure on hostels was to be cut down to the minimum, partly by introducing simpler and more hygienic food and partly by reducing overhead charges through student participation. Regular studies were not totally taboo. In fact, studies were to be encouraged, subject to two conditions: (1) they should not cut down the time for national service, for four to six hours a day; and (2) they should be integrally related to the national service programme undertaken. Moreover, senior and advanced students were required to help the weaker and backward students regularly and this was to be regarded as their national service, if they so desired. In fact, our view was that studies so organised would be more realistic and more interesting and so help in raising standards. This forecast was found to be fully justified in later evaluations: physical fasting improved health and the mental fasting caused by stopping of the regular inert studies kindled interest in life and roused curiosity. In short, the whole philosophy and methodology of the movement could be summed up in the following *Testament* which all children were to read and pledge themselves to everyday.

Beloved Bapuji and Chachaji,

You helped us to discover our country to ourselves, to visualise the great destiny towards which it is marching and to commit ourselves to it, and thus gave us faith and confidence in ourselves and in our country's future.

We are the fortunate few of our generation who are privileged to receive education. We realise that in order to provide this privilege to us millions of our poor countrymen are toiling hard and denying themselves even the necessities of existence. We, therefore, pledge ourselves to return this favour by identifying

ourselves with the lot of the common people and shall ever strive our best to serve them.

We realise that in the modern world the best insurance for each individual is a social order based on equality and justice and that salvation can never be achieved through selfishness. We shall ever strive to subordinate our desires to the common good.

We realise that India is poor and underdeveloped today. At this moment, the only way to progress lies through toil (much of which is drudgery) and austerity. We shall accept these willingly in order that a tomorrow of less strenuous or more pleasant work and greater comforts may soon be born.

We realise that we are a privileged generation. No earlier generation had this challenge and opportunity of building up a prosperous India. No succeeding generation can have it either, because we hope to complete the task ourselves. No price can be too high to be paid for this privilege.

And thus the revolutionary school year began on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November; and the programme went on so magnificently and such keen enthusiasm was generated that the results surpassed all expectations. And, my God, what a hectic six I had: touring, talking, seeing, participating, guiding and, above all, learning and getting some new insights into the problem which, for instance, all the learned and bulky documents of the Ministry of Education and of the Planning Commission had totally missed and which I did not find even in the speeches and writings of<sup>7</sup> who is the Holy Trinity in Indian education (and probably in many other things too), I mean, the trinity of : (1) I-know-all; (2) I-am-always-right; and (3) you-are-an-ignoramus-who-goes-wrong-when-you-do-not-agree-with-me. For instance, I had never realised before that money can do so little really to vitalise education and that was really needed were two things; (1) a sense of commitment, a commitment beyond self, a commitment to great and abiding values which give a meaning to life; and (2) the creative joy of participating in a worthwhile task. I had never realised so vividly at any earlier time that the apathy, the listlessness, the so-called indiscipline of students and all the endless malaise of our educational system really arose from one cause: what happened in the classroom was an inert action that had long ceased to have any meaning either for the students or for the teachers and that, even though both were trying to keep up a show that they were

engaged in a worthwhile or momentous task, the illusion could no longer be maintained for the bulk of students and teachers. This, in fact, was the main point of our illiterate advisers. They said that men would always appreciate a good thing when they saw it. If education was not being valued by society, the educator, they said, must look within and see whether what he was trying to sell as gold was really gold. But instead of doing so, he merely got into a temper (a sure sign of weakness) and called others ignorant, which, to say the least, was very uneducated behaviour. We all agreed with them that the best way to “sell” education was to make it “saleable” and what better way can there be to sell it except to link it intimately with the entire programme of national reconstruction so that the future of education becomes the future of the country itself?

Of course, I spoke first of what I learnt – all dictators always begin (and most of them must also end) with themselves. But all other departments, government itself, learned such a lot. In the beginning, the other departments of government were asked to assist the programme. In doing so, they could not but get themselves infected with the new enthusiasm so that there was a general dynamism in all government departments. What the Army and the Jawan had begun, the schools and the students continued and deepened.

We also discovered that the “day” or “week” celebrations<sup>8</sup> we used to indulge in (e.g. the Harijan Day, the Social Education Day; the Saffai Day, etc., or the Courtesy Week, the Basic Education Week, etc.) were really the worst administrative invention of the post-Independence period. This discovery of the celebration of days or weeks was a feat of genius in the difficult situation which we inherited on the attainment of independence. On the one hand, we had inherited a large number of noble ideas from our national leaders which we could not repudiate. On the other hand, we were not prepared, in a mad rush to cash on past sacrifices, to suffer or work hard for realising them. It was in this dilemma that the idea of celebrating a day or a week came as a gift from.<sup>9</sup> It killed not two but three birds with one stone. We could reconcile ourselves with our conscience which wanted noble things to be done. We were not required to compromise with either our selfishness or our laziness because we were not required to do anything whatsoever; and, what is most important of all, we could

have some fun we so dearly loved. Like all people who have nothing to celebrate, we just love celebrations. So we converted into a “day” or a “week” celebration every noble concept we could not repudiate in theory and did not desire to put into practice. But now the whole programme was different. In this national service programme, all celebrations within the schools were immediately stopped. How can you celebrate a six-month programme for schools except by work? What is even more important, all celebrations outside the schools were also stopped: how can you celebrate anything at all if you cannot conscript students and teachers for processions and meetings? So the era of celebrations came to an end and inevitably gave place to an era of work.

It was the happiest moment in my life when, after reviewing the outstanding results of the six months of a new campaign, I stood up to address a huge gathering of teachers, students, and parents at the Guru-Shishya Leela Grounds in New Delhi. My voice was choked with emotion and I just could not say a word, believe me, a man who can hardly ever stop from talking! Fortunately the situation was saved for me because even as I got up, the crowd began a thunderous clapping which went on and on, getting louder and louder. I thus got a breathing space in which I could control my emotions, become normal, and ready to speak. But the clapping would not stop and went on becoming louder still. It almost reached an irritating point when I was bursting to speak, with the pressure of words and ideas mounting up every millionth of a second in my brain. Yet the crowd went on clapping and did not allow me to say a word. The blood of a Dictator boiled up in me and I wanted to shout them down and felt almost choked. But still the clapping went on and on, becoming ever louder and louder. The next thing I knew was that I was feeling suffocated in bed and the alarm clock which I had set up at 5.30 a.m. was ringing my head off and preventing me from sleeping on. I cursed the nuisance and the man who invented the alarm clock; but there it was – my dictatorship had been destroyed for ever.

And how I regret that it was just a dream !

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#### REFERENCES

1. Oh, I forgot to mention. My first order on assuming charge was to abolish the Planning Commission, not so much to plan better as to be able to plan at all.
2. The poet who said that a little knowledge was a dangerous thing was a fool—well, like most poets. But I never realised until now how dangerous a thing a “know-all” state can be!
3. You would have guessed by now that the press had every chance to survive in my dictatorship. Who else would publish my speeches, free of charge, otherwise?
4. By the way, dreams can be funny, you know. I have a distinct recollection that my dictatorship came in before both Nehru and Shastri so that they are not impeached here in the expression “earlier regime”. I know that this is historically impossible. But you know that in dreams as in the Security Council, anything can happen.
5. A knowledge of our cultural heritage, lives and writings of great Indians, history of the freedom struggle, national goals as defined by the Constitution, a vision of the new social order that we are striving for and the means for its creation, the Five Year Plans, etc.
6. In addition to this obligatory part, some students should do further work connected with their speciality. For instance, medical students could treat sick people, agriculture students could help farmers, etc.
7. You can substitute your pet aversion here. It should not be difficult to make a choice: this has been a large and an increasing tribe for some time. It arose among the politicians and is now spreading to the next kinship group, university professors who are not professors.
8. The classification of programmes into “days” or “weeks” is purely arbitrary and makes no difference of substance because the celebration of a week means, in practice, the celebration of the opening day.
9. You may put in “Heaven” or “Hell”, according to your taste.

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### A Quick Appraisal of the National Adult Education Programme in Gujarat (1979)\*

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A significant aspect of the national Adult Education Programme is the proposal to have a built-in mechanism for continuous evaluation which can help to monitor the pace, size and quality of the Programme as it is being translated into action and thereby assist in improving both planning and implementation. As a part of the strategy, a quick appraisal of the Programme in Gujarat State was recently carried out through the Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research, Ahmedabad. A summary of the appraisal will, it is hoped, be of great value of interest to all workers in the field. The Ministry of Education and Social Welfare proposed to carry out similar evaluations in other areas of the country as well.

The State of Gujarat has come to be forerunner in the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP). The Gujarat Vidyapeeth, which has a vast experience of educational activities oriented to development, established the State Resource Centre in October, 1977, and played the role of a promoter of the Programme. It identified a number of voluntary agencies already engaged in constructive programmes and encouraged them to establish Adult Education Centres (AECs). By July 1978, 47 voluntary agencies were running 2,118 AECs with an enrolment of 89,970 adult learners in 14 districts: these form 2.15% of the total adult illiterate population of 41.76 lakhs (age group 15-35) in the state. It was, therefore, felt that a quick appraisal of this programme would provide a useful feedback to all concerned and the task was

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\*Indian Council of Adult Education, Feb. 1979

entrusted to the Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research, Ahmedabad. The limited objectives of the study were:

- to audit the data of the adult education centres;
- to examine the working of the adult education centres vis-a-vis the objectives of the National Adult Education Programme;
- to identify the factors responsible for the strength and weakness;
- to indicate the areas for action.

#### METHODOLOGY

The 'universe' of the study was restricted to AECs which were opened before 15 April, 1978, and had thus functioned for about five to six months before the investigation. It involved 37 voluntary agencies and included 1,753 classes (with an enrolment of 56,718). Of this a ten per cent random sample stratified according to voluntary agencies was drawn up for the study. This included 181 AECs of which 88.8 per cent were located in rural areas and 11.2 per cent in urban areas.

But as 11 of these AECs had since closed down and could not be visited, the number of AECs actually studied was 169 with an enrolment of 5468 (inclusive of dropouts).

Questionnaires were addressed to all the 47 voluntary agencies (VAs) of whom 45 responded. Interviews were held with 169 instructors of AECs studied, 530 adult learners (against a target of three persons per AECs), and 65 dropouts (against a target of one dropout per centre).

The team of investigators who actually visited the Centres consisted of 64 college teachers who volunteered to participate and 31 Government Officers (either Educational Inspectors or Assistant Inspectors) who were nominated for the purpose. They were all oriented to their work in two short seminars of two days each, held in September 1978. They were divided into 30 teams of one college teacher and a Government Officer and 34 individual teams consisting of only one college teacher each. Every team had to visit one to three centres and complete its work within 15 days of the Orientation Seminar. Actually, the entire field work was over by the third week of October, 1978/

#### The Main Findings

- 1) The records maintained by the voluntary agencies were neither upto-date nor comprehensive
- 2) The average enrolment in the AECs was 32.4 per cent.
- 3) The number of days on which the classes were held in a month showed great variations: 3 classes met less than 5 times a months, 35 met between 20 and 25 times, 85 met between 20 to 25 times, and 44 met more than 25 times. No information could be had about two classes.
- 4) The average attendance found on the day of the actual visit was less (67.6%), than shown in the attendance register. Even in this, some adults seemed to have been rounded up because there was advance intimation of the visit.
- 5) The level of drop-out showed a substantial variation between Centres. While 73.96 per cent of the sample Centres did not have drop-outs, about 5 per cent had experienced the problem of drop-outs ranging from 10 per cent to 30 per cent of the total enrolment. The average dropouts, it was found that 49.2 per cent of the dropout respondents left the AECs because of family circumstances and 10.8 per cent of economic reasons. It may be noted that 64.6 per cent of the dropouts belonged to SC, ST and almost an equal percentage of them were associated with agriculture.
- 6) It is a matter of satisfaction to note that only 6.2 per cent of the sample AECs were not functioning at the time of the field visit. The reasons, in detail, for closure or non-functioning of the Centres must be found out. The study did not provide for collecting data in this regard.
- 7) There did not appear to be any systematic arrangement for repeating courses for those who joined the AECs late, and yet several AECs admitted fresh students at later dates.
- 8) About 30 per cent if the sample AECs were organised for females only, about 40 per cent if them were organised for males only, and the remaining were organised for both sexes. Similarly, about 70% of the AECs were organised for the weaker sections (48.5 % for ST, 10.1% for other backward classes, 8.9% for SC and 3% for SC, OBC). About

39 per cent of the sample AECs were functioning in rural areas. In view of the special emphasis being given to the weaker sections, females and rural population, it seems that the state government and the voluntary agencies have done a fairly commendable job. It must be pointed out, however, that there seem to be very few centres showing the mix of ST/SC on the one hand and other social groups on the other. In fact, some investigators recorded in their diary that the high caste Hindu adult learners refused to participate in such AECs where the instructor belonged to ST/SC or where some ST/SC learners joined the AECs.

- 9) It was observed that in the sample AECs, about 1.1 per cent of the learners were below 15 years and 7.6 per cent of them were above 35 years. Since the programme aims at the age group 15-35 years, a departure from this norm must be viewed in the context of its magnitude as well as the prevalent casual attitude among the target group regarding exactness in their age.
- 10) As per the records maintained at the samples AECs, 84 per cent of the learners were occupied in agriculture, 4.5 per cent of them were self-employed and the rest were mostly non-workers, in the sample of 530 learners interviewed for this study, the proportion of non-workers, mostly women, is slightly higher. A detailed classification of occupation of the learners included in the study indicates the need for the AECs to record the economic activities of the learners in greater details.
- 11) There seems to be wide range of difference in performance. It was observed that 59 per cent of the learners had acquired the skill to write and another 15.5 per cent could scribble their names. Female learners seems to have fared a little better as compared to their male counterparts. In arithmetic, 38.3 per cent were rated as good, 40.6 per cent as average and 21.1 per cent poor. This is probably to be expected.
- 12) It was observed that 16.4 per cent of the learners had the benefit of some schooling prior to attending the AECs.
- 13) It is more difficult to examine the learners' achievement in terms of social awareness and functionality which are the

two other basic components of NAEP. For one thing, it is hard to construct appropriate objective tests relating to these aspects. For the other, it is difficult to disentangle AECs contribution from that of mass media and the like. Nevertheless, the study provided for some questions in the learners questionnaire so as to get an idea about their achievement in terms of social awareness and functionality. Favourable response to the questions of this type varied from 44.4 per cent to 68.38 per cent. The level of achievement on the part of learners seems to be on the lower side. There is reason to believe that the AECs are least equipped to deal with these two components of the NAEP. It was observed that one half of the instructors, and in one specific case 89 per cent, had not received any teaching materials relating to many important aspects of social awareness and functionality. This is understandable, but the point to emphasize is that if the NAEP is to succeed in achieving its stated objectives, this is one of the areas which deserves much greater attention than given to it at present, particularly from the VAs and SRCs

- 14) More than half (55.37 %) of the instructors were having education below S.S.C and one-fifth had passed the S.S.C. Examination. As far as training is concerned, 80.23 per cent of the instructors are reported to have received training of some form or other for teaching at the AECs. It appears that the motivation level of a large segment of the instructors was high.
- 15) It was observed that about 19 per cent of the instructors had not received the remuneration regularly. While the reason could not be probed into within the study framework, this situation needs remedial action. About 61 per cent of the instructors felt that the amount of remuneration fixed for them was inadequate. This question deserved some attention from the policy makers.
- 16) It was observed that there was much to be desired in matters of organisational and environmental inputs of the AECs, such as place of AECs, physical facilities like lighting arrangement, sitting arrangements etc. The NAEP depends, of necessity, on utilising the available public

building facilities in the community, such as school buildings, panchayat buildings, community halls, etc. In the present sample, only about 28 per cent of the AECs were found to be held in public buildings, an equal percentage of the AECs were found to be held in open space and about 37 per cent were held in the instructor's house. The organisers will do well if serious thoughts are given to this aspect before the actual launching of the AECs.

On the whole, the Programme in Gujarat was generally found to be addressed to the target groups kept in view under the NAEP, and to have some other commendable aspects also. All things considered, its achievement in terms of spread of literacy is rather modest; more so, in terms of social awareness and functionality.

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### Education for Our People: An Agenda for Immediate Action (1979)\*

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#### AN AGENDA FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

The people feel deeply concerned at the continuing crisis in which the education system now finds itself and are extremely anxious that a programme for the radical reconstruction of education should be immediately taken up by the government in co-operation with teachers, students and parents, especially because education is a major instrument of socioeconomic transformation. It was to voice this feeling and demand that the Citizens for Democracy prepared and published, after wide ranging discussions with leaders in all walks of life, a policy frame for the development of education in the country under the title, *Education for Our People*, to which Sri Jayaprakash Narayan wrote a foreword. This has received wide support among different sections of the people and the time is now ripe to launch a vigorous programme of action to implement the proposals put forwards in this publication. A Consultation organised by J.P. Amrit Kosh Trust and Citizens for Democracy at Patna on 13-14 January 1979 examined this issue and suggest the following agenda for immediate action. It has the full support of Sri Jayaprakash Narayan.

#### Mass Education

The existing education system is almost exclusively geared to the education of the upper and middle classes. A radical reform needed is to reorient it to the education of the masses who are still

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\*Indian Council of Adult Education, Feb. 1979

illiterate and whose children either do not enter the schools or drop out soon after entry. We therefore welcome the decision of Government to take simultaneous steps to make primary education universal and to promote adult education (including the liquidation of adult illiteracy). To succeed in this programme—and succeed it must at any cost—programmes of non-formal education should be developed in a big way both for children as well as adults, through the full involvement of social workers, voluntary agencies, students and teachers. A rigidity of approach should be avoided and large-scale experimentation on new and innovative lines should be organised and encouraged. There should be special efforts to spread education among girls, scheduled castes and tribes, other weaker sections like landless agricultural labourers and in backward regions and areas. The resources allocated to the programme should be increased as the campaigns grow and, under any circumstances, they should not be reduced or diverted to other sectors as has often happened in the past.

#### **The Common School for Children in the Age-group 6-14**

To create a cohesive and egalitarian society, it is necessary that all children of the country should learn and grow together in a common educational system. It should therefore be a policy of Government to adopt the common school system as early as possible and to abolish the special and public schools which now segregate the rich and the well-to-do from the poor. As a first step towards the realisation of this goal, all children in the age-group 6-14 at least should be brought under the common school system. For this purpose, parliament (or the state legislatures) should enact legislation interacting that no school at the primary stage (classes I-VIII) shall charge fees and that admissions in these classes in all special and public schools should be made on merit and in accordance with the principles laid down by government from time to time. This will not however affect the freedom of a minority to reserve seats for its own children in the institutions conducted by it. Such a measure will bring the children of all social classes together, create genuine equality of educational opportunity, and raise the standards of primary education substantially in a short time.

#### **Participation in Socially Useful Productive Work and Community Service**

With a view to ending the alienation of educated persons from the rest of the community and especially from the toiling masses, effective participation in socially useful productive work and in meaningful and challenging programmes of community study or service should be an integral part of education at all stages and should be obligatory for all teachers and students. A proper development of this programme, subject to the broad guidelines prescribed, should be a condition of recognition or affiliation for every educational institution. Each institution should be free to evolve suitable programmes of work and community study or service suited to its environment and resources. Significant programmes developed by individual institutions should be encouraged, assisted and widely publicised.

#### **Decentralisation, Diversity, Flexibility and Autonomy**

A major weakness of the existing educational structure is its rigidity, insistence on uniformity, lack of flexibility, the dominance of external examinations, and the excessive power vested in the administration which deprives schools and teachers of the essential freedom to innovate and the experiment or to assume responsibility for what they teach. An urgent radical reform needed therefore is to make the educational system decentralised, diversified, flexible and dynamic and to confer a large measure of autonomy on schools and teachers. The following steps should therefore be taken immediately:

1. The administration of education should be largely decentralised and adequate authority should be vested in appropriate organisations created for the purpose at the District and lower levels. At the local community level, the people (and especially the women and deprived groups) should be given an effective voice in the management of education in their areas. An efficient machinery for educational planning should be developed at the state, district, block and institutional levels.
2. The programme of conferring autonomy on affiliated colleges should be pushed vigorously, the goal being to make every college autonomous as early as possible. The programme should also be initiated at the school stage and

selected institutions should be given autonomy from the public examinations at the end of class X and class XII.

3. The policies which press in the direction of uniformity (which necessarily make the system centralise) and rigidity (which tend to make the system static) should be de-emphasised, and with in the board framework of a national policy on education, the educational authorities at every level, including schools and teachers, should have full freedom to innovate and experiment and to adjust their programmes to local conditions and the needs of their students. There should be adequate machinery to evaluate innovations and experiments, and to encourage, assist and publicise them.
4. Educational administration should be de-bureaucratised, and teachers, students, parents and the public should be largely involved in the provision and management of education. This will also involve a thorough re-education and re-orientation of educational administrators and the creation of new cooperative and democratic structures like the school complexes recommended by the Education Commission.

### Teachers

The transformation of the educational system from within on the lines indicated above, creation of a climate of sustained hard work and pursuit of knowledge within the system, and raising of standards all around, depends essentially upon the teachers, their academic independence, their competence, their sense of duty and commitment to the country, to the educational system, and to the students entrusted to their care. A massive programme of the re-education and re-orientation of teachers at all levels to give them an understanding of, and a commitment to the needed radical reconstruction of education, as well as to improve their professional competence, should be immediately launched and sustained over the next few years. Teachers at all levels should also be given an effective voice in the planning of educational reforms and actively involved in implementing them.

### Secondary Education

1. No post-primary education can be claimed as a matter of right. The expansion of formal secondary and higher

education should therefore be related to the local needs and to the resources available.

2. Every effort should be made to develop non-formal education and channels of part-time and self-study at the secondary and university stages.
3. In the formal secondary system, the emphasis should now shift from expansion to consolidation of existing institutions, improvement in standards, and relating education to social needs, especially in the rural areas.
4. Carefully planned, intensive, and sustained efforts are needed to improve the higher secondary stage of education which has now been introduced over large parts of the country and is soon expected to be adopted on a nationwide basis. Its significance should not be under-emphasised: it can give a new turn to the entire school stage which precedes it and also lay the foundation of a good system of higher education.
5. Programmes of vocationalisation to be developed at the secondary stage need careful planning and sustained effort. The schools and industry should be brought closer for this purpose through appropriate organisations at the national, state and district levels and programmes of training should be developed in industries side by side with those of vocational education in schools.

### Degrees and Jobs

The close links between degrees and jobs have intensified the pressures on the university system and brought it to virtual collapse. It is therefore extremely urgent and important to relieve these pressures and to delink jobs from degrees. For this purpose, the following steps may be initiated by the central and state governments who are the large employers of collected manpower:

1. The qualifications prescribed for all jobs should be delined from degrees and restated in terms of task performances and skill and knowledge requirement. They may, if so desired, be connected with the merit examinations to be held by Public Service Commissions.
2. All recruitment should be done on the basis of special examinations conducted separately for each job or categories of jobs by the recruiting agencies.

3. For all subordinate posts where secondary education is all that is required, recruitment should be done on the basis of the candidates' performances in Class X or Class XII examinations (with supplementary special tests where necessary) and an appropriate age, say 18, should be prescribed (with some relaxation for weaker sections) to achieve the objectives in view.
4. The UPSC examinations for all Central services should be open to candidates of a certain age and should be delinked even from attendance at any institution of higher education. The State Public Service Commissions should adopt a similar policy for all State Service examinations.
5. The UPSC should conduct a national merit certificate examination (approximately at the BA level) to which any person above the age of 19 should be free to appear without any condition of attendance at an institution of higher education. Similar examinations should be conducted by State Public Service Commissions (or any other suitable agency created for the purpose) in their own areas

### Higher Education

1. The system of higher education in the country is in a deep crisis which is having an adverse effect, not only on the education system, but on the society as a whole. Urgent and drastic steps must be taken to resolve this crisis which arises for political, economic, organisational and academic factors. The political system which now only disturbs the universities should abandon these policies and strive earnestly to create conditions under which the institutions of higher learning can function satisfactorily. An all-part programme to this end should be prepared and acted upon. The problem of educated unemployment which saps student's motivation and leads to unrest and deterioration of standards should be dealt with sympathetically and imaginatively on the economic front. The delinking of jobs from degrees will, as stated above, relieve the university system of the responsibilities of grading and certification, which it is unable to perform and under whose weight it is even prevented from discharging its legitimate responsibilities of production, conservation and distribution of knowledge.

The grant of autonomy to all colleges will relieve the universities from other administrative responsibilities (including the holding of external examinations) and create the necessary atmosphere for the pursuit of knowledge and excellence through the joint and dedicated efforts of teachers and students. In this, the greatest responsibility lies on the management of universities and the teachers who, we trust, will rise to the occasion. To assist their efforts, gheraos, strikes and such other unacademic and violent means should be totally eschewed and made illegal by declaring education an essential service. Such methods have no place in academic life where problems and disputes have to be resolved through discussion, mutual goodwill, and the democratic process of give and take for which joint councils of teachers and students should be constituted and assisted to function actively.

2. There should be a moratorium, during the Sixth Plan period, on the opening of any new universities and colleges, except where a clear case for their establishment is made out in backward areas as defined by the Planning Commission.
3. It is a basic responsibility of the university system to develop the Indian languages and through them, to spread modern knowledge, especially of science, to the masses of people. The programme of using the Indian languages as media of instruction should therefore be vigorously developed. We also welcome the holding of UPSC examinations in all the Indian languages: it creates, for the first time, a situation where a student using the Indian language is not debarred from competing for the highest posts under government.
4. An intensive effort to raise standards all round should be mounted under the leadership of teachers and with full involvement of students. Among other things, this should involve a thorough restructuring of courses on the lines indicated by the UGC. The universities should insist on a rigorous maintenance of standards, not only in their own departments, but in the affiliated colleges as well.
5. There should be close and appropriate linkage between the universities, research institutions and industry in regard to



research in natural and social sciences as well as for the development of the proper mix of technologies the country needs.

### Talent Search

1. An intensive and nationwide search for talent should be launched; and all talented students at every stage should be assisted to continue their education in good institutions at the next stage.
2. The educational concessions and assistance given to scheduled castes and tribes should be continued, subject to a means test universally applied.
3. A fairly large programme of similar assistance should be launched immediately for talented but economically handicapped students not belonging to the scheduled castes or tribes students. It should be operated on the basis of merit.

### Finance

1. The central and state resources allocated to education should be increased. Every effort should be made to harness resources from other sources, including fees in institutions of higher education.
2. Intensive efforts should be made to minimise or eliminate waste in existing patterns of spending and to make a more effective use of available resources.
3. There should be a continuous efforts to redeploy resources from programmes meant for the upper and middle classes (or the rich and well-to-do people in rural and urban haves) to those for the masses (or the rural and urban poor.)

We appeal to the central and state governments, teachers, students, and the general public to undertake this significant programme of educational reconstruction on a priority basis and to pursue it to success vigorously and in a sustained manner as an integral part of the large national endeavour to create a new democratic, socialist and secular order based on equality, justice, freedom and dignity of individual.

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### Educational Development in India during the Next Twenty Years: 1981-2000\*

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In my presentation, I do not propose to go into many details but want to make a few major points. The first thing that we must accept is the need for a long-term educational plan. If you want to plan well, then you have to plan for a 100 years. Education is a long gestation process and unless you really have a vision your planning can never be right. That is why, as early as 1937, when the Indian National Congress appointed a Planning Commission under Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, there was a sub-committee to prepare an educational plan. Owing to various difficulties the plan never got prepared, though some ideas were put forward.

The first long term plan we ever had was in 1944, covering a period of 40 years, 1944-1984, known as 'Post-War Educational Development in India'. As I said, this was the first long-term plan of education and like all first attempts, not the best. It had many weaknesses. The first was a very narrow objective. The objective was to create in India by 1984, an educational system which existed in England in 1939. That is how it starts and that itself has stultified the plan. Then it laid down principles which would not be acceptable to the leaders. It provided for universal primary education for all children between the ages 6-14, i.e. the first cycle of education. But secondly and higher education were selective. Secondary education was provided for one child out of every five with a selection at the eleventh class, according to the then practice in England. Higher education was provided for every one out of

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\*Indian Council of Adult Education, Feb. 1979

15 who completed secondary school. Technical education was provided to a few persons. The liquidation of adult illiteracy was visualised.

Now, though the universal primary education part and adult education part were acceptable, the highly selective system of secondary and higher education based on the British model was never acceptable here. The plan had another weakness; it did not allow for an increase in population. Today, one might get a laugh out of its forecast that India could have a good system of education by 1984 and it would cost only Rs. 200 crores a year! We are spending today over Rs. 3,000 crores a year and are yet far from the goal. This was a first attempt at a plan, made under an alien government; but still, I respect it because it was an attempt to have a long-term plan.

The second attempt was made by the Education Commission who submitted their report in 1966. But it did not look forward to the next forty years. The world was changing too fast. In 1944, people could believe that they could plan for forty years. This was impossible in 1966. So, the Commission took a shorter period, the twenty-year span of 1966-1986, and gave a detailed plan which was certainly better than the first plan because, naturally, they had more experience to guide them. They felt that it would be possible to liquidate illiteracy, provide universal education up to class eight to about 50 per cent of the children; higher secondary education to about 20 per cent higher education to about 2 to 5 per cent of the under-graduate population. Overall, it was felt that education would cost about Rs. 54/- p.a. per head in 1966. This was a much better plan as such.

Now today in 1979, two things have happened. One, this planning concept itself is treated as out of date; and two, a good deal of what the Commission recommended has not happened. And even though the plan is up to 1986, it is no good now. For in 1979, we are not at that point where the Education Commission expected us to be.

Let me give one example. The Education Commission expected that expenditure on education would increase from 3 per cent of the national income to 6 per cent. In 1960, we spent 1.2

per cent of the national income on education. By 1966, it had risen to 3 per cent that is a little more than double. So the Commission felt that by 1986 it would double again from 3 per cent to 6 per cent. The latest figures show that the expenditure has increased in rupees but the value of the rupee itself has gone down. Rs. 622 crores was the expenditure in 1966, and as I said, today it is about Rs. 2,800 crores. But as a percentage of the National Income, we spent 3 per cent in 1966 and now we spend only 3.4 per cent. This estimate is on the basis of a favourable estimate of national income today. If you take other estimates you might find that we are spending 3.1 per cent now as against 3 per cent in 1966.

Thus the old perspective is no longer valid. We have to prepare a new perspective for educational development and the pity is that there is no such perspective at all. There is no national planning by the Government of India as to the lines on which it proposes to develop education within the next 20 years.

Now let us make out the difference between a policy statement and a plan. We cannot have a plan without a policy statement. A policy statement is only the first step, but it is not a plan. It is easy to say that we will have universal primary education and, as you know, we are very adept in making policy statements of this type. But the question is, how much is it going to cost, where is the money going to come from, what are the strategies we are going to adopt? Unless all these questions are answered in detail and a plan of action is prepared with sufficient quantitative details, it is not a perspective plan.

The Janata Government was trying to prepare a policy statement and it has published what you call a Draft Policy Statement. I do not know what is going to be the fate of that Draft with the fall of the Janata government. That statement is going to become an orphan, literally. What type of new government will we have, will the new government adopt it, in what way will it change it? All this is an open issue. Now we do not have even a policy statement for the next 20 years and we do not have a plan at all. As of today, there are no steps being taken to prepare such a plan. This is a very sad state of affairs.

We might say that there are countries that do not have a plan. America does not have a plan. England does not have the type of planned education I am referring to, but it has some plan. In a country where society is fairly stabilised, the problems are not of the order that we have. In countries which have not accepted the techniques of planned development, the absence of an education plan can at least be understood. But what we cannot understand is the absence of an educational plan, a long-term perspective in a country which has accepted the principle of planned development. It only means that in this country education still continues to be a marginal issue – we may have it or we may not have it. This is something against which we have to struggle.

I think what we should insist upon is that the government should prepare a plan. But let me also say another thing. The two plans that I mentioned earlier are national plans. A national plan is much easier to prepare because the difference between the states, between different parts of the country, all get hidden in the average. My experience is that a national plan based on average is a good plan for the country but does not apply to any situation whatsoever on the ground.

For example, if you say 80 per cent of the children in India attend primary school, this is just imagination because in no case will you find this true. In states like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra enrolment is nearly 95 per cent and if you go to a state like Orissa, in certain parts it is just 20 per cent. So, these averages are as deceptive as the average depth of a river which according to an old story was supposed to be 2 ½ feet and the people who tried to cross it on that assumption invariably got drowned.

A national plan is good for indicating certain broad directions but it cannot lead to action. What can lead to action on the ground is a state plan and, if you ask me, even further district level planning. Long-term plans of educational development in the states have not been prepared at all so far, and educational plans at the district level, even short-term plans, do not exist. Planning is not an exercise to be done only at the national level and, what I say that we want truly constructive plans for development, we

really want them at all three levels, national, state, district and even at a fourth level i.e., the institutional level. Of course, the scope and nature of these plans will be different, but this type of detailed planning at various levels is crucial to the implementation of a given policy. This is something which will require intensive effort in the next two or three years because if we succeed in creating an atmosphere of this type, and if such plans are prepared, the very exercise itself will generate forces and an insight which will help us to improve our educational setting.

Now I come to the second point. How shall we set about preparing such a plan? Here I want to make an obvious point, one which is generally not taken note of. Our practice so far, even though we adopted the technique of planned development as early as 1950, has been this; to present the country with one plan, a one bulk offer, and just say, "take it, or leave it; whether it be the first plan, the second plan or even the sixth plan.

The Planning Commission puts forward a plan which goes through various processes and is then presented to Parliament and to the people. It is open for discussion and for criticism. Probably marginal adjustments are seen as possible; but they are not generally done. For since it is a one-plan structure, you tell the people, "Look, this is what we think is best for you, take it or leave it".

My point is that if we really want to start a debate and make people conscious of the problems, the issues involved, and the alternatives that are open, we should not have one plan but several plans based on alternative strategies and alternative assumptions, place before the people. Let the people discuss and decide what they will accept. The public gets educated not by presenting to it just one facet of a problem but by presenting a variety of faces, a variety of scenarios, and then asking it to choose. If we accept scenario A, then this is something that is likely to happen; if it is B, then this; and if it is C, then this. We should prepare plans on the basis of more than one assumption and these basic assumptions could be very different. For instance, how would you like to promote higher education in the country? Today 85 per cent of the colleges are in private hands and privately managed

and there is a talk about nationalising. I would say this question really becomes debatable if we prepare three separate plans for higher education. One on the assumption that it is entirely a state-managed system, another on the assumption that the present system continues as it is, and a third with some modification of the present situation.

If you take two or three of these various approaches and work out the details, probably the different aspects of the problem would be much clearer than what they are now. So, my second point really is that if we wish to make a plan, it should not be one plan but a set of alternative plans. Let us say a minimum of three or four, each based on clearly stated assumptions.

To illustrate my point as to what happens in this approach, let us take only one set of assumptions. Let me take the plan prepared by the Education Commission, for the twenty-year span of 1966-86. What were the assumptions made by the Education Commission? I am merely stating them, whether one agrees with them or not.

1. There will be a strong and stable government both at the Centre and in the States and these governments will be committed to the development of education.
2. There would be a limit on population growth. There are three projections: High, medium and low. The Commission accepted the low projection, i.e. a 3.5 per cent population growth, a general reduction to 1.5 per cent over a period of 25 years.
3. A high rate of growth of national income. Our experience in the last 30 years is that national income has grown at 3.7 per cent per year, and per capita income has doubled in 20 years.
4. From 3 per cent of national income, the money spent on education would rise to 6 per cent as the plan was made.

One thing I can say frankly is that the plan was made on ideal assumptions and the last 10 years have shown that these ideal assumptions are now a thing of the past. If these assumptions had been made in 1947, when the first plan had been prepared, one

could understand. But the 12 years after 1966 have refuted them and if I look to the twenty years ahead or even ten years ahead, I find even the first condition – a strong and stable government at the Centre and at the State level committed to educational development – may or may not materialise.

Another caution is, when we make a long-term plan with a clear set of assumptions which are good but utopian as it were, then we have a plan which looks fine, looks achievable, but still is plan which is very difficult to implement. I have no objection on a plan like this. I would call this scenario one, but it should not be only scenario. We can have other scenarios in which these utopian assumptions are changed.

For example, if we take one extreme of the matter, can we not make another set of assumptions? What happens if the things, as they stand now, were there in the immediate past also and still continue? It is a very likely thing to happen. Then let me say what will happen (i) the population will not grow so slowly, it will grow much more rapidly, (ii) the national income will grow not at 6 per cent but at 3.7 per cent, (iii) the share of education with in national income will not be doubled in twenty years; but in twelve years it will risen from 3 per cent to 3.4 per cent.

We also find another thing happening. With every plan the size of the plan is increasing and the money allocated to education is decreasing. In the first plan, 7 per cent of the plan was allotted to education whereas in the larger sixth plan the allocation is only 2.8 per cent of the plan. I am quite sure that in the next plan, it will be below 2.8 per cent. For as the committed expenditure on education increases it gets more and more difficult to find additional funds and the trend is for additional funds available to be less. The Education Commission assumed that the largest part of education development would be diverted to primary and adult education but, for the last 10 years, the greater part has been spent on secondary and higher education and this is very likely to continue.

Why not have another scenario? Let us extrapolate whatever has been in the past, add to it some obvious things like political instability and political weakness, and then you get a picture at

the other extreme. If you were to contrast the two scenarios and take any other scenario, as the case may be, and make the assumptions, then we get a much better insight into the problem and can really make a draft plan and get public opinion on the plan.

Let me illustrate my point by giving one more example. The question which the Education Commission had put to us was: Who will bring about the change after all? The Education Commission wanted changes to be brought about and the question is who will be the agent of change? The Education Commission's view was that the responsibility for transforming education should be that of the central and state governments. Very correct. And the Commission said, if they do not accept do not accept the responsibility, nobody else can or will.

I do not want to argue whether this assumption was right or wrong but what I find is that, if I take that assumption for the next 10 years, nothing will happen in education because the government today, as I see it, responds only to pressures. Running the government is reduced to crisis management. You turn from one crisis to another and you listen to the voice which at the moment seems to be the most dominant and you make compromises.

If this is the art of government, then to imagine that the government will undertake the development of education will not be correct. The only idea I can put forward is that those who believe in the significance of education must launch a movement among the people and outside the government, thereby creating enough pressure to which the government will respond. Only then it is possible to get any policy enunciated. Before I went to Delhi as an Adviser to the Government of India, I was working in a village. When invited to go to Delhi, I accepted, since I believed that an educational revolution would come to the village from there. Twenty years later I realise that I had hoped for the impossible. The chances of an education revolution going from the village to Delhi are greater than that of a revolution from Delhi going down to the village. But you need workers at both the fronts as at many other fronts.

The assumption of the Education Commission was that the change agents for a new system of education are mainly teachers, students and education administrators, and if the state government gave the lead and the financial support, the necessary transformation of education would be brought about by these three groups: teachers, students and educational administrators.

I find that in the last 12 years this assumption has not proved correct. I am not prepared to believe that teachers can be the change agents in education because no education reform can be got free. It involves a cost and unless the groups concerned are prepared to pay the price, I do not think education will change.

The attitude of the last 10-12 years, the general attitude, was very beautifully described in a book entitled *The Little Less*. This put forward the philosophy of how workers are trying to get a little more money for a little less work and the logical conclusions that follow. I find that teachers often take the same role. If you propose an education reform, it involves more work for teachers, and I have found, to my sorrow, that opposition comes from teachers rather than from others. Worse still, in some of the North Indian areas, which I will not name, the teachers do not oppose reform directly but they set up students to oppose it. I find that organised student bodies are instigated by teachers who spend money on maintaining goondas to create and see that the reform is not introduced. I am not saying that everybody is like that, but it is a glib assumption that teachers and students can be change agents in education or that education administrators can play this role. We really have to give some serious thought as to who really are going to be the change agents.

I am going to give you some illustrations of what I have reviewed. My salient proposal would be that in a long-term perspective plan the most important issues are the following:

1. What are your assumptions for social change, for social development? Because in the absence of social change you cannot plan change in education. You have to make some assumptions about it.
2. You have to make assumptions about what type of an educational system you will need in the country.

3. You have to make assumptions about the role of education.
4. You will have to make assumptions about who will be the change agents, and
5. How you are going to administer and finance the system.

All these are very important things and there are not just one but several assumptions that would follow. This would be an exercise for the next twenty years with more than one scenario. When these are compared and contrasted, a policy statement and programme will emerge.

My last point is: Who will do this? One answer could be that the Government should appoint another commission. Now the commissions take a long time to complete their reports. They are also very costly. Commissions that write brief reports are rather rare and their recommendations are very often unimplementable.

I would say after the experience of the last Education Commission that it would take great moral courage on the part of any government to appoint another commission now. So, I will rule out that possibility. Then, what are we to do? A second way is for a standing committee of the Planning Commission to prepare a long-term perspective plan for education. I tried to sell this idea to the Planning Commission but I find that they do not bite, for the obvious reason. Their argument is that if they make a 20 year plan for education, they will have to provide money for it. They do not want to be caught eating their own words. They would rather not prepare an educational plan than prepare one and then say, 'We cannot find money for it'. Generally, any attempt at providing an educational plan in the Planning Commission, is not done. I have asked the state governments to do that but I find they are unwilling to make long-term plan for exactly the same reason. Besides, as precedents show, it is the weakest and politically lightest person that is usually selected as the Education Minister whether it is in the state or in the centre. Or, even if it is a member in the Planning Commission, the case is the same more often than not. When the Government of India Act of 1919 was being passed, a system of diarchy was to be introduced. The Montague Chelmsford report was to show how

to divide the government into two parts and to recommend which departments should be transferred to India. That Report laid down four conditions to decide whether a department should be transferred or not:

1. A subject in which India has shown great interest to be transferred.
2. A subject in which there are plenty of opportunities for social service.
3. A subject in which mistakes are not likely to be made.
4. A subject in which mistakes even if made are not going to be very disastrous.

Education came under all the four conditions and was transferred. That basic attitude remains unchanged to this day. That is why I have really given up the hope of the Planning Commission ever preparing a long term perspective plan.

The point is, if we want such a plan there has to be a sustained official initiative. Somebody, some group of people, have to take it upon themselves to do this. The Carnegie Commission in the United States was a Commission on Higher Education. The US had no plan for any subject including education, but there was a group of people who thought there must be a long-term perspective plan for higher education because in so far as school education was concerned it was already universal. The only area which they thought was the weakest was that of higher education. So the Carnegie Commission undertook a number of studies and prepared an Eight-Year Plan of development for higher education in the United States. Such a plan once prepared, will certainly have a deep effect in educating public opinion, in moulding policies and so on. I think something similar would happen even in India if we really were to do it.

What I would say is that there is challenge to educators who are interested in the building up of a good educational system in the country. It is not necessary that they should agree. In fact they should have sharp differences of opinion, contrasting or opposite views and people should come forward with one, three or even four plans.

If we begin now, we are not beginning too early and if what you do may not have an effect on the Sixth Plan it will certainly have an effect on the Seventh and later plans and this is something I would request educational institutions and educationists to do today.

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### Three Channels of Education in Developing Countries: Some Needed Reforms (1979)\*

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Formal, Non-formal, Incidental – these are the three channels along which a society conducts its entire educational process, and to which individuals get exposed in varying degrees at different stages of their lives. Occasionally these constituent elements blend happily into an integrated effort, but more often they come into conflict, become lopsided, creating inequality, and anti-development and unjust situations, by tending the classes rather than masses. Drawing attention to these, the paper suggests some reforms both in the Formal and Non-formal channels, so that education plays its destined role in a vibrant manner in establishing a development-oriented society which is just, equitable and harmonious.

#### THREE CHANNELS OF EDUCATION

The total educational process of a society consists of three distinct channels which operate side by side:

- a) Schools or the formal education system.
- b) Non-formal educational activities organised outside the formal education system and consciously aimed at meeting specific learning needs of children, youth or adults.
- c) Incidental education or learning that results from merely living in society, or engaging in work, or through contacts with other members of the society and exposure to social events and movements.

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\**Indian Journal of Adult Education*, 1979



Every individual is generally exposed to all these three channels of education, although the influence of each channel varies greatly from one period of life to another. Incidental education, for instance, is most effective in the early years of life, formal education during childhood and youth, and non-formal education during adulthood. Similarly, all social groups are exposed to every channel; but different social groups derive unequal benefits from them. The privileged upper and middle classes, for instance, are the principal beneficiaries of secondary and higher education in developing countries, while the vast bulk of the poor people receive little or no benefit from formal education and are mainly educated through the incidental and non-formal channels.

Sometimes, all these three channels are interrelated and planned in an integrated fashion to give the best results. For instance, the school often provides, not only formal education, but a good deal of non-formal education through programmes like study-service or extra-curricular activities, and excellent incidental education through its functioning as a miniature community. Similarly, a good programme of in-service professional education for doctors, for example, is organised through an appropriate atmosphere and good working conditions in hospitals, non-formal programmes of professional growth (e.g. participation in seminars or keeping in touch with professional journals) and periodical refresher courses within the formal system. But very often, this well-designed coordination is absent and these three channels pull in different directions or are geared to contradictory purposes. For instance, the incidental and most non-formal education in a traditional society tends to be conservative and to support the status quo in values, beliefs and lifestyle while formal and new non-formal channels strive to modernise them, often with little success. Similarly, the almost exclusive monopoly of secondary and higher education by the upper and middle classes alienates them from the masses in developing societies (who are mostly educated through incidental and non-formal education), transforms them into an exploiting rather than a service group, tends to generate social tensions and hinders development. It is therefore, obvious that educational

planning cannot afford to concentrate on formal education alone, as it has unfortunately done in the past. It must take into account all the three channels of education - incidental, non-formal and formal - and strive to ensure that they are properly interrelated to provide complementary and mutually supportive services in order to reach the identical goals of individual growth and social development in the best and most economical manner possible.

### THE PRESENT SITUATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In most developing countries, they are, at present, three distinct categories of educational services.

- 1) *Formal Education*: The first and the most extensive service is that of formal education or the schools. It is on this service that national government incur the largest part of their educational expenditures. And yet its effective coverage is woefully limited. At the pre-school stage, its services cover mostly the children of the urban well-to-do. At the elementary stage, most of these countries have been unable to provide universal education; and the high rate of drop-outs or push-outs implies that only a small proportion of their children complete the elementary school. In secondary and higher education the system is quantitatively limited and restricted mainly to the upper and middle classes. There are hardly any programmes for adults among whom illiteracy rates are high. Qualitatively also, the formal system leaves a good deal to be desired; and its main weaknesses are that it continues (or even widens) the gulf between the classes and the masses and that its relationship to "development understood in terms of the improvement in the over-all standards of living of the deprived and poor is generally tenuous and often negative.
- 2) *Non-formal Channels of Education* : Side by side with the formal education system, a sector of modern "non-formal channels of education has also grown up. This includes the mass media—press, film, radio and television. It also includes the library services and special government

programmes such as agricultural extension or family planning or the training components of programmes like development of small-scale, cottage or village industries. But even here, the picture of beneficiaries (and hence the objectives and content as well) gets distorted because of social and economic equalities. In India, for instance, the English press is by far the best. But its use is limited to the elite while the Indian language press is nowhere so well developed, nor does it reach the masses because of their illiteracy. The film has little educational content and is mostly a negative tool for development. The radio reaches people but its educational value is small. The television is still limited to the rich in a few cities. The health services over-emphasize curative aspects and their preventive and promotive aspects which could provide scope for non-formal education are still largely under-utilised; and so on. On the whole, it may be said that even today the modern non-formal education sector is also mainly oriented to the westernised, the haves and the elite rather than to the masses, and it is more concerned with the continuance and strengthening of the position of the privileged than with development as such or with improving the standards of living of the poor and underprivileged.

- 3) *Traditional Non-formal and Incidental Education*: The traditional sector of non-formal and incidental education still continues to dominate the scene. In fact, it is through these channels that the vast bulk of the people still receive their education and are socialised. In India, for instance, the agriculturists still learn their vocational skills by practical experience on the family farm; and most of the craftsman and artisans still learn their trades by apprenticeship to parents just as girl learn home-craft and child-rearing by apprenticeship to their mothers. In fact, vocational skills in the large unorganised sectors are generally learnt through the traditional, incidental and non-formal education. Similarly, the whole field of folk games, folk music, folk drama and folk arts is still outside the formal school and within the traditional sectors. The value system of the

masses, their beliefs and life-styles are still determined by incidental and traditional non-formal education which has three main weaknesses: (a) It is *inadequate* and does not cover several important aspects of modernity (e.g. science and technology); (b) It is *erroneous* in several respects and rests on outdated knowledge and beliefs long since disproved; and (c) It is too *old-fashioned* and static to be an instrument for helping the individual to adjust himself/herself to the rapidly changing modern societies. In fact, it is these aspects of the incidental and traditional non-formal education (which are almost the exclusive tools of mass education) that constitute the major psychological and cultural bottlenecks to development.

It is obvious that this fragmented and often antithetical system creates more problems than it solves. Therefore, the task facing most developing countries is to transform this unhappy position and to develop both formal and non-formal education and relate them to one another in such a way that the essential climate, skills and workers for development are created.

### Some Needed Reforms: Formal Education

What are the changes needed in the existing system of formal education to realise this objective? We shall briefly refer to four of them for they broadly cover all the essential aspects of the reforms required.

- 1) *Emphasize Adult Education*: Perhaps the most important change needed is to emphasize adult education. The old view that "education" is essential only during childhood and youth is now outdated; and we must look upon education as a life-long process and strive to create a learning society. For this purpose, adult education which can be best promoted through non-formal channels should become an integral and important part of the formal education system. Moreover, in developing countries, besides literacy the highest emphasis will have to be laid on elimination of adult illiteracy and on adequate follow-up work as a part of this programme. What is even more

important, this programme should imply not only functional literacy or learning of vocational skills, but also awakening of the poor and under privileged to the social reality and organising them so that they can improve their standards of living and assert themselves.

- 2) *Change Elementary Education:* Equally urgent is the need to change the formal system of elementary education which is now based on a single-point entry (in Grade 1 at about the age of five or six years), sequential annual promotions from class to class, full-time attendance by pupils, and instruction by full-time and professionally trained teachers. The costs of such a system are high, so that its extent necessarily becomes limited in a poor country. Moreover, this system does not allow a second chance to those unfortunate children who miss its single entry point; and it also drops or pushes out all those grown up children who are compelled to work at home or outside for economic considerations. It is therefore necessary to adopt a multiple-entry system and devise non-formal channels of education to meet the needs of the vast bulk of children who cannot avail themselves the existing system of full-time formal elementary education. This is the only way in which elementary education can be made universal. As in the case adult education, the content and ethos of the entire system which is oriented to upper and middle classes will also have to be changed to suit the needs of masses.
- 3) *Increase Accessibility:* The access of the poor and underprivileged group to secondary and higher education is extremely limited; and it is essential to widen it, partly through a liberal programme of scholarships to talented child from economically handicapped groups mainly by the adoption of several non-formal programmes. To begin with, overemphasis now laid on a single uninterrupted career from Grade 1 to Ph.D should be abandoned and it should be recognised that it is much better to adopt a system of recurrent education under which a student alternates between school and work and enrich both. Secondly correspondence education and sandwich courses

should be widely promoted and private study encouraged so that workers have good access to secondary and higher education it can promote individual growth and enhance career prospects. Lastly, all examinations should be thrown open to private candidates as well. These changes are needed not only in general education, but even more so in vocational and professional education.

- 4) *Extend Institutions:* The fourth major change needed is to accept "extension" as a responsibility of all educational institutions, to make the school a centre of the community, and to involve all students and teachers in programmes of non-formal education aimed at those sections of society which are unable to take advantage of the formal system. The 'study-service' scheme is one example of the manner in which institutions of higher education can be involved in programmes of development and in generating important programmes of non-formal education for the people. At the secondary and elementary levels, students and teachers can be similarly used for programmes of adult education for the community and in developmental tasks of no mean significance. In fact, such programmes will enrich formal education and also help improve the quality of non-formal education programmes even while cutting down their costs.

The great advantages of the type of change proposed above are obvious. They will improve the quality of the formal system, extend its coverage, link education more closely with development, bring the upper classes and masses together, and help create a homogeneous and egalitarian social order.

#### Some Needed Reforms: Non-Formal Education

If an integrated system of formal and non-formal education is to be created, changes in the formal system (like those indicated in the preceding paras) are necessary but not sufficient. They will have to be accompanied by corresponding changes in the modern and traditional non-formal sectors as well.

- 1) *Modern Sector:* In so far as the modern non-formal sector is concerned, the principal change needed is to extend its

coverage to include the masses of poor and under-privileged people, especially those living in the rural and remote areas. As literacy spreads, the press (especially the Indian language press) and the library services will begin to come into their own. Equally urgent efforts are needed to increase the use of film, radio and television. But an even greater change needed is to improve the quality of their programmes and to gear them closely to development and needs of the people so that these mass media are used as instruments for education of the people rather than as tools for the entertainment of the haves or for the provision of a romantic escape to the have-nots.

- 2) *Traditional Sector:* Perhaps the most important changes needed are in the traditional programmes of non-formal education which, as was pointed out earlier, are practically the sole channels of education for the masses and which are now languishing for want of academic and financial support. Here our efforts will have to be developed on three main fronts. The first is to give them an adequate status and official support so that they gain in prestige and come to be regarded as at least equal to the modern forms of non-formal education. The second is to give them full academic support: this will be possible only if academics begin to study them and take interest in them in large numbers. The third is to develop them as powerful instruments of modernisation and development: this will be possible if their content is radically transformed by including modern science and an appropriate social philosophy of development. If these efforts are made, we shall be taking steps to modernise the entire society instead of concentrating our efforts, as we have done so far, on modernising the elite only.

#### Some Needed Reforms: Incidental Education

Although we do not propose to deal with incidental education in detail, one point needs to be emphasized here, viz., the reforms proposed above in the formal and non-formal sectors will result in an improvement of the quality of incidental education. All

programmes of adult education of the masses (which should also be accompanied by improvement of their standards of living) will improve the atmosphere and conditions of living in their families. This will inevitably provide better incidental education to their children and make them more receptive to the programmes of formal and non-formal education. Similarly, the quality of social life itself is bound to change when the people as a whole are initiated to scientific ways of thinking and new concepts in social philosophy and are helped to organise and assert themselves to improve their standards of living. This new social atmosphere will necessarily add another valuable dimension to the incidental education which all members of the society receive. Needless to say, this improvement of the incidental education will, in its turn, lead to further qualitative improvement in formal and non-formal education.

#### A NEW EDUCATION AND A NEW SOCIETY

The preceding discussion has highlighted the contradictions and weaknesses within the existing educational systems of developing countries. These nations have evolved fragmented and uncoordinated systems of education in which the channels of formal, modern non-formal, traditional non-formal and incidental education often with different objectives, cater to different social groups and, on the whole, hinder rather than help development. This educational scene is, in a way, a reflection of such an inequalitarian social and economic system in which the modernised (or rather westernised) and educated elite live beside large masses of uneducated and traditional people, and in which a small sector of modernise and organised industry co-exists with a large unorganised sector of agriculture and traditional crafts. To improve the unhappy state of affairs, we must evolve an integrated system of education in which all the three channels of incidental, non-formal (whether traditional or modern) and formal education are properly linked and made to serve complementary and inter-dependent objectives, instead of running them as parallel and often contradictory system as we do at present. This is the only way to provide lifelong education to all and to create a learning society. This will imply extensive

changes, not only in the content, processes and form of formal education at all stages and through integration with appropriate forms of non-formal education but also equally considerable changes in the modern forms of non-formal education and a supreme effort to modernise and develop all traditional forms of non-formal education as well. Such an effort is eminently worth while but it cannot be made in a vacuum. It can succeed best if simultaneous efforts are also made to create a more homogeneous and egalitarian social order which assures at least basic minimum standards of living to all.

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### Reconstruction of Education\*

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#### EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Education Commission was fully justified in calling its Report, *Education and National Development*, to highlight the interdependence of education and development. It also tried to indicate how Indian education will have to be transformed, improved and expanded to promote national development. As the narrative in the preceding chapters has shown, this attempt was only a limited success and gives several pointers for making a second and better planned attack on the problem. Some of the important ones of these pointers are briefly discussed below:

- 1) The Commission did not give a clear picture of "development", that is, of the future society we should strive to create in the country and the steps to be taken afresh. In fact, it is essential to maintain a nation-wide debate on the subject in the years ahead.
- 2) While the Commission did a fairly good blueprint of the national system of education, its Report did not highlight the close links between education and society. Nor did it elucidate how the dialectical process of education leads, on the one hand, to a strengthening and perpetuation of the status quo and on the other, to social change and development. The proposals to be framed in future for the creation of national system of education will, therefore, have to be clearly justified with reference to the new society we desire to create.

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\**Indian Journal of Adult Education*, 1979

- 3) A very persistent effort needs to be made to educate all concerned to realise that a radical reconstruction of education and a socio-economic transformation have to go together. It is very often found that people believe that major educational changes can be brought about without attempting corresponding changes in society itself. Such illusions do a considerable harm and have to be dispelled.
- 4) There is very little understanding about the price that society has to pay to create a national system of education. Not too infrequently, this price is highly underestimated. Very often, people believe that this price is essentially in terms of financial investment, say, six per cent of the national income. It is very essential to educate the people to realise that "money" is the least of all the different prices that society has to pay for creating a good educational system. Money no doubt is needed for educational reform; but money alone, whatever its quantum, can never achieve the goal. The more significant prices that society has to pay for education include the investment of "thought"; of dedication; of sustained hard work by teachers, students, educational administrators and others; of courage to make hard and unpleasant decisions; and above all of a willingness to change the society itself.
- 5) It needs also to be emphasized that every citizen and every social group is an actor, with his or its own unique role, in the national system of education. While therefore different individuals and social groups have their own unique roles to play in education, a national system of education cannot be created by any one individual or social group or even by some of them working together. It can be created only when *every* individual and *every* social group plays his or its assigned role.

Of these five valuable lessons, the first three deal with a conceptual clarification of the problems involved and with the preparation of a broad revised outline of a national system of education. We shall consider them first. The last two deal essentially with implementation and will be discussed in a later section.

### THE FUTURE SOCIETY

There are several ways in which the vision of the future society can be presented. We would however like to adopt a simpler approach to the problem, viz. to state the worst aspects of the existing social order which have to be eliminated as early as possible. This will indicate, not only some of the major features of the future society, but also a programme of action. From this point of view, we consider three aspects of the present society as its worst evils.

- 1) *Elitism*: The first weakness is the elitist character of our society in which all power - political, economic and knowledge - is concentrated in the hands of a small elite which, despite its internal jealousies and quarrels, always keeps a united front vis-à-vis the masses of people who are marginalised and unable to assert themselves or to plan their own destiny. We created this elite structure of our society some centuries ago when all power was vested in the three upper castes (or social groups): the *Brahmins* who monopolised the power of knowledge, the *Kshatriyas* who monopolised political power, and the *Vaishyas* who monopolised the money power. These three castes were described as *twice-born*, their second birth being their initiation into the study of the sacred texts to which they alone were entitled. This designation, therefore, shows what united these castes together as well as what separated them from the vast masses of people—the *Shudras* who lived as slaves or workers and the *Antyajas* or the outcastes like the untouchables who lived precariously on the social fringe. Our society accepted this unjust organisation, gave it a religious and social sanction, and created a philosophical base which reconciled the masses of people to their marginalised status in society and successfully prevented them from rising in revolt.

The advent of Islam did not change this picture materially because the Muslim society itself got divided into the similar elite groups and the masses of people and the overall society continued to present the same elitist model, the Hindu and Muslim elites joining hands, in spite of their internal rivalries, to keep the masses of people - both Hindu

and Muslim - suppressed and marginalised. Even in the modern period, and in spite of the introduction of secular and democratic trends and the creation of a Western system of education, the same elitist model perpetuated. This is because the elite of the pre-modern period who had social status, economic power in the form of ownership of land, trade and industries, and political power in the sense of positions in government and the army were the first to see the advantages of modernisation and get full benefit of the new educational opportunities that were being opened up. This suited the British also who saw in them a group of intermediaries and interpreters who might help to stabilise their rule.

As education spread to wider sections of society and as secular and democratic forces became increasingly stronger, three main changes occurred in these elite groups: (i) the membership of the group ceased to be almost exclusively based on birth or caste and several individuals of the non-elite castes were co-opted into elite status through the educational system which, while promoting vertical social mobility, also acted as a great screening device to show who should or should not be so co-opted; (ii) the ranks of the elites were considerably increased to accommodate the new arrivals who far outnumbered those that dropped out for some reason or the other; and (iii) the elite system was legitimised on grounds of "merit" and was no longer in need of any explanation in terms of previous births or *karma*. In the Indian society of today, therefore, the ruling elite consists of the top 20-30 per cent of the people who include the modern *Kshatriyas* or wielders of political power (e.g., the politicians, the bureaucracy, and the army, etc., who constitute the *state*), the modern *Vaishyas* or the wielders of economic power (e.g., the industrialists, merchants, etc., who constitute the commercial *corporation*), and the modern *Brahmins* (e.g., the learned people or the intelligentsia who constitute the *university* system). The rest of the population which is 70-80 per cent of the total leads a subhuman existence, is purely marginalised, and is bereft of all power - political, economic or knowledge - and is deprived of education and all other good things of life.

The two main forces of modernisation, education and science and technology, have allied themselves with the elite and helped them to improve their standards of living but have not done (or were not allowed to do) a corresponding service to the masses of people. The elite themselves had a brief honeymoon with the people in the pre-independence period to present a united front against the British and to drive them. But once this goal was achieved, they returned to their original position of a ruling and exploiting group, notwithstanding the many populist slogans they had learnt in the meanwhile to mouth. In fact, this new society of a modernised elite ruling over a still traditional people is far worse than that of the past when both the elite and people were traditional when neither of them had any access to modern science, when the gap between their standards of living was not so wide nor felt so keenly, and when the elite did not have access to all the modern means of tyranny and suppression.

- 2) The second grave weakness of our society, which practically follows from this elitist character, is its hierarchical organisation. It will be wrong to assume that the society is divided into only two groups—the elite and the masses. Actually, it is a highly fragmented society in which there are thousands of small groups (a situation which often gives it an appearance of a society which consists almost exclusively of minorities) each of which is trying to relate itself to others, not in a horizontal relationship, but in a hierarchical order on the basis of some real or imagined advantage. Even the lowest social group—the scheduled castes—is far from homogeneous: it is divided into several subgroups all hierarchically arranged so that even the attempt to help the scheduled castes often ends in helping only those who are the most powerful among the scheduled castes. This hierarchical tradition which has gone deep in our blood is inimical to the values of democracy and social justice and is one of the major obstacles to progress.
- 3) The third major weakness of our present social order is poverty which has few parallels in the world. The majority of our people live below the poverty line and a substantial



proportion of them lead an almost subhuman existence. It is this colossal and degrading poverty that is at the root of most of the evils we see around us: low standards of nutrition, bad housing conditions, and inability to benefit from social services such as education or health. This is not merely a question of more production, though it is necessary and is made more difficult by growth of population. It is also a problem of the nature of production as well as of equitable distribution.

There are two other areas where recent trends give us cause for concern. We have rightly adopted the principle of secularism in organising our public life. The Hindu tradition of tolerance and respect for other religions is a definite asset; and in the past 150 years, we have made considerable progress to develop a secular society and policy. But the recent upsurge of revivalist communal forces, both in the Islamic and the Hindu world do not portend well. They can only generate tensions and conflicts and spell great danger to national stability and progress. The second is the rise of authoritarian trends which forebode ill to the delicate plant of democracy we have been nurturing and must continue to foster. Both these developments are recent and have begun to loom large on the horizon after the Report of the Education Commission. But there is no doubt that they will have to be very carefully watched in the days ahead.

Assuming that we are agreed on this analysis, what is the programme of development that we should undertake? Here a preliminary observation is necessary. The current debate on the subject of development in India is divided over two models: the capitalist model which we have actually adopted and which has the largest support, and the socialist model to which we pay a lip service and which is advocated only by a minority. One can have one's preference between the two. We, on our part, do not believe that the capitalist model will meet our needs and between the two, would certainly prefer the socialist model. But many will not share this view and maybe, for equally good reasons. The point we would like to highlight in this context is that there can be a third model. The consumerist society that the Western nations have created, some through capitalism and others through socialism, has led to grave crises of environmental degradation, depletion of scarce and non-renewable resources, intense social

and political tensions between and within nations and stockpiling of nuclear weapons which pose a threat to the very existence of man. Under these circumstances, it would be perfectly in order to turn away from both these models and seek a third model where sheer consumerism will not be equated with the quality of life and where a new appropriate technology will be developed in keeping with our resource endowment (including population) and our needs, without detriment to our environment. The discovery of this third model is a universal need. It is also a great possibility in India; and the life and thought of Mahatma Gandhi can make a material contribution to it. It is in our best national interests to concentrate on the evolution of this third model.

To combat the elitist trends, in which a smaller number of people come to decide the vital issues affecting the lives of larger number of people, we need, first and foremost, the adoption of a new philosophy: faith in the common man. We must believe in his dignity, in his basic wisdom, and in his inherent capacity to manage himself. We must also be prepared to organise the society on the basic principles of individual dignity and autonomy, adjustments being made therein only when another person's equal right to autonomy and dignity is affected. In other words, we must accept the need to transfer effective power from the elite to the masses. Here power means all the three forms of power — political, economic and knowledge — which are obviously interrelated. It should be clearly understood that this also implies a revolt against the growth of extreme professionalism in the modern society which results in a great restriction of individual freedom. In other words, we must equate the development of our country with the development of our suppressed masses and accept the view that the best input into this development is the people's awareness of themselves, and of the social reality around them, a rekindling of their faith in themselves, and helping them to organise themselves to solve their problems. This new approach will liberate the oppressed masses and also elevate the elite by freeing them from the dehumanising role of an oppressor in which they have trapped themselves. It is obvious that this readjustment of the present relations between the elite and the masses will not be smooth or easy. It may even become violent if the elite do not see the writing on the wall or take their own enlightened self-interest into consideration. A change of heart on the part of the

elite is necessary. But it cannot be a prime mover. Nor can it be successful in the absence of counter-pressures. Perhaps what is needed is a simultaneous effort for a change of heart among the elite and for organising and strengthening the masses, with the state coming to the aid of the people where necessary.

The problems of inequality and poverty will have to be tackled together. A number of steps will be needed here. Perhaps the most fundamental are a rectification of the extremely skewed pattern of ownership in property and income: without this and without some drastic restraint on the wealth, income and consumption of the top 30 per cent of the population (which we have been unable to do), nothing worthwhile will be achieved. Equally important is the discovery and use of an appropriate technology which will be suited to the size of our population, to our resource endowment, and to the pressing problems of mounting pollution. Thirdly, we should concentrate on the production of commodities which the common man needs (rather than on the luxury goods required by the elite) and make these available everywhere at reasonable price, if necessary, through a public distribution system; and lastly, we should ensure a minimum standard of living for *every* individual through guaranteed employment at a wage which will enable him to meet all his essential needs. It is only in this way that effective economic power will be transferred to the people. On this foundation it will be easy to transfer political power by building organisations of the people to enable them to make effective use of adult franchise, and knowledge power, through programmes of universal elementary and adult education.

The third major programme will be that of social and national integration. This was a serious concern when the Education Commission wrote its Report. It still continues to be so; if anything, recent developments have made it even more serious. The fragmentation of political life and the non-existence of any party which can command loyalties on a nation-wide basis poses a danger to the delicate process of nation-building which is well under way but far from being complete. Reference has already been made to the growth of authoritarian trends and communal revivalism. Regional rivalries and linguistic empire-building are also adding fuel to the fire. Social and national integration does not merely imply a negative action to counteract these evils. It also

means the positive and the more difficult task of changing attitudes, teaching different groups to retain their identity and yet to live together in a society with shared common goals and programmes, and to create in every citizen, irrespective of caste, race, or religion, the sense of common Indian identity to which he will be loyal and for which he will be prepared to sacrifice. There is no doubt that, in the years ahead, a very major political concern will be to promote social and national integration and to deal firmly with all the forces that tend to subvert it.

It is of course granted that neither this vision of the future society nor the programme to create it will be shared by all. It should not be; and it is to be expected that there would be other visions of the future society we should have and other means of creating it. But what one regrets most is that there is not enough of national debate on the subject. One of our first concerns therefore should be to revive this debate among all concerned: the academics, the politicians, the teachers, the students and the general public. As this debate proceeds, the problems involved will become clearer; and what is even more important, the number of those who are committed to the radical socio-economic transformation we need will also grow. This will help us greatly in the task of bringing about the socio-economic transformation itself.

#### THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION: A REVISED BLUEPRINT

Quite obviously, every vision of a future society and the means of creating it will necessarily imply a vision of the national system of education which this future society will need. For, education and society are like two sides of a coin: one leads to the other and cannot exist without it. It is obviously not possible, nor is it necessary, to discuss all the different models of the future society we can imagine and their educational implications. Our purpose will be served if we discuss, as an illustration, some educational implications of the model of the future society we have outlined above. While doing so, we shall also indicate where the proposals made by the Education Commission need a modification or future examination and why.

Two preliminary words of caution would be in order here. Firstly, it should be noted that the ideas of the national system of

education evolved between 1906 when the Indian National Congress adopted its Resolution on national education and 1966 when the Education Commission submitted its Report were conceived in very different social-economic and political contexts. These will not necessarily apply to the future where the problems we are tackling would be very different. For instance, the dominating concept between 1906 and 1947 has been that of winning political freedom; between 1947 and 1978 we were obsessed with bridging the gap between our elite and the international elite; and in future, we will be most concerned with creating a non-elitist people controlled and people-oriented egalitarian society which would be based on the values adumbrated in the Preamble to the Constitution and which will eschew poverty, ignorance, ill-health and at least all the grosser forms of exploitation. We must therefore be prepared to give up or modify ideas that have outlived their utility.

We must also be willing to adopt new ideas that have become relevant due to sheer impact of social changes. Secondly, it is also necessary to guard against the common tendency to adopt some Western model, or some preferred combination of such models. While the study of all available models is essential, one's final choice need not be restricted to borrowed models only. This is all the more necessary because it is not easy to transplant social institutions, and because we are also thinking of creating our own model of a non-consumerist society which implies the creation of our own model of education. A *Swadeshi* spirit is necessary in all reconstruction; more so in education.

### 1) A New Educational Structure

Perhaps one of the most significant contributions of the Education Commission was to suggest a radical modification of the existing educational structure (not in the arithmetical sense of  $10 + 2 + 3$ ) with its single-point entry in class I at about the age of six, its sequential annual promotions, its insistence on full-time attendance, its almost exclusive dependence on full-time professional teachers, and its emphasis on teaching rather than learning. The Commission was also highly critical of the existing trend in favour of centralisation and uniformity and of the dominance of external examinations which also made the system

rigid and static and deprived schools and teachers of their autonomy. Nor was the Commission happy with the atmosphere of listlessness that generally prevails in the system, its minimal use of even the existing facilities which is almost a crime in a poor country like ours, the lack of integration between different stages and the utter isolation and atomisation of individual institutions. The image of the national system of education which the Commission projected was therefore extremely forward-looking. According to the Commission, the national system of education:

- should not divide life into two water-tight compartments of full-time education followed by full-time work, but should make it possible for all individuals to combine work and education throughout life;
- should not divide individuals into two rigid categories of (a) educated people who do not work with their hands, and (b) workers who do not receive any formal education, but should make all individuals educated persons and productive workers;
- should emphasize learning rather than teaching;
- should not be exclusively dependent on full-time and formal education, but should develop large-scale programmes of non-formal education and all the three channels of full-time, part-time and own-time education which should have an equal status;
- should not be exclusively dependent on full-time teachers and use all the teaching resources available in the community;
- should be decentralised, diversified, elastic and dynamic, and should provide large scope for experimentation and innovation by schools and teachers;
- should provide a period of part-time education and part-time work between full-time education and full-time work to make the transition smooth; and in addition, it should also provide a programme of recurrent and continuing education so that every individual shall have all the opportunities for lifelong learning through a channel of his choice; and he may also return to the formal system or step off it according to his needs;

- should provide close linkages between different stages and between all educational institutions in a given locality so that it functions as an integrated system;
- should use as intensively as possible all the existing facilities and resources so that a climate of sustained hard work is created and maintained; and
- should create communities of dedicated students and teachers engaged in a joint pursuit of truth and excellence.

The value of this contribution is now being increasingly recognised. In the years ahead, we have to carry these ideas to all concerned and evolve and implement concrete programmes based on these unexceptionable principles.

It is essential to note some important aspects of the school system which have to be highlighted to transform the existing educational structure to suit future needs. For instance, the existing school system was created in the early nineteenth century on the basis of a philosophy of liberalism and individual competition which then prevailed. These values still continue to dominate the system and the question is whether they are adequate or even appropriate for our future needs. It is true that one of the objectives of the educational system is to function as the social institution for the pursuit of knowledge. But it also functions as the social mechanism for grading and certification of achievement, eventually for selection for admission into different social strata. This raises two basic issues: (a) How far are these functions compatible with one another? and (b) Would it be better to separate them and assign each to a different institution? The present educational structure, borrowed from U.K., has all the characteristics of industrial production suited for the “knowledge” industry. How healthy are these characteristics and what modifications do they need? There is a “hidden” curriculum in our educational system as in all others. For instance, our curricula project, in a very subtle fashion, the values of consumerism, capitalism, and competition. How appropriate are these for the new society we desire to create? Many other issues of this type can also be raised. One of the major tasks of the years ahead therefore is to study these problems intensively and to develop further the concepts evolved by the Education Commission to create a new educational structure in keeping with our needs and aspirations and the future society we wish to create.

## 2) Education of the People

If the creation of a people-controlled and people oriented society is our social objective, our educational policies must give the highest priority to the education of the people. In fact, we should go further and create an educational system which may be described as education of the people, for the people, and by the people. It is only such an educational system that will suit the democratic society we wish to create. The creation of such a system has been our professed objective. But in our heart of hearts, we really desired to continue the elite dominated society. There is therefore little wonder that we failed; in fact, given our real social objectives, it would have been a surprise if we had succeeded.

What does this goal of education for the people mean in terms of concrete educational programmes?

- a) First and foremost, it means the *liquidation of adult illiteracy and the development of a continuing programme of adult education*. The basic objective of this programme should be to create awareness among the adults about themselves and about the social reality around them. It should also give them confidence in themselves and organise them successfully to solve their day-to-day problems. This is precisely what Mahatma Gandhi meant when he insisted that political education is an essential component of all adult education. The desire for literacy and for further education will follow this basic orientation to development. The Education Commission has suggested that this task should be completed by 1985-86. There is no reason why we cannot still do it by then or at least a little later, say, by 1990-91. No amount should be considered too large for the purpose and under no circumstances should the programme be allowed to lag behind for lack of financial resources. It is however obvious that money will not be the bottleneck. The main difficulties are likely to be the lack of an adequate political will and the non-availability of dedicated and competent workers. It is these aspects of the problem that need the utmost attention.
- b) Side by side, more intensive efforts are needed *to provide universal elementary education to all children, at least in the age-*

group of 6-14. Even this task is stupendous; and as was shown earlier, the present indications are that we shall not be able to reach the goal even by the end of the Seventh Plan, i.e. by 1987-88. Steps are therefore needed to speed up the programme and to complete it earlier if possible; and under no circumstances should the programme be allowed to go beyond 1990-91. It must also be noted that this target of universal education up to 14 years of age is already dated and that most developed countries provide not only elementary education but even secondary education on a free, universal and compulsory basis. Mahatma Gandhi had advocated only seven years' basic education for all (age-group 7-14). But as a good deal of this time was spent in learning English, and he was opposed to the teaching of English at this stage, he felt that it would be possible, even within this period of seven years to give an education which will be equal in content to that of the matriculation examination (held at the end of class X) minus English plus craft. This can only mean that Mahatma Gandhi really wanted a ten-year school to be made universal and compulsory. This is what the Education Commission also recommended as the long-term objective. It would be in the fitness of things if we make this the target to be reached by A.D. 2000.

- c) Some thought has to be given to the content of elementary education or education up to class VII which it is our object to universalise. The suggestion of the Commission on this subject that it should be undifferentiated general education emphasising language and communication skills, science and mathematics, work-experience and social service, humanities and social sciences, physical education and the fine arts are still valid and will be more so as time passes. Its main objectives should be three: (1) to introduce the child to the best elements of the accumulated culture of all peoples, including that of his own country; (2) to stimulate curiosity and a desire to learn; and (3) to give the child a capacity to learn further by himself. This last objective which generally does not receive the attention it deserves is extremely important. It implies that a person who has received such elementary education will be able to receive

all post-elementary education he needs or desires on his own through non-formal channels. If these programmes of non-formal education are properly developed and if the formal system itself becomes more elastic and permits multiple-entry as emphasized by the Education Commission, so that any young person or adult may enter it whenever he likes and according to his needs, an educational system which provides opportunities of lifelong learning to all can be created.

- d) There is one more important aspect which is often ignored. In the past, modernisation was equated with knowledge of the English language and with secondary and university education. This is why only those social groups which knew English and received secondary and higher education were modernised and that modernisation was confined to the elite only. We are *not* using the expression "modernisation" as equivalent to "westernisation" although what happened to most people of the category described here is that they were only westernised without being modernised and that, very often, they only combined the worst features of both the East and the West. But even using the phrase modernisation in its proper sense (i.e. of a person who retains the best of his own culture and combines it with the best he adopts from others and has a secular, rational and scientific temper and a commitment to the values adumbrated in the Preamble to the Constitution), there is no reason why the process of modernisation should be restricted to those who have received secondary and higher education and know English. In fact, all education should help to modernise. The process should be an integral part of adult education and of elementary education. It should be continued at the post-elementary stage through all programmes of non-formal education so that it reaches all that vast sector of society which will still be outside the formal system of education at the secondary and university stages even in the year 2000. This is the only way in which we can modernise the people and thereby modernise the society as a whole.

- e) Since the objective of social policy is to bridge the gap between the elites and the people, there is no longer any justification for segregating the children of the elite from the children of the people as we now do. A major reform to be implemented here is the adoption of the common school system, with the neighbourhood school concept being universally adopted for the age-group 6-14. All the children of this country must study in neighbourhood schools (which should all maintain fairly comparable standards) and rub shoulders with each other, irrespective of their social and economic status, religion, caste, or race. There is no question of admissions on merit at this stage — these will come in the post-secondary and higher education. Similarly, there would no longer be any justification to maintain the public or special schools.
- f) If the *programme* of non-formal education is to be developed in a big way, it will not be possible to rely exclusively on full-time professional teachers as the formal education system does. It will therefore be necessary to utilise all the community resources available for educational purposes and use fully the services of non-professional part-time teachers to teach what they know best. In other words, the local communities will not only be planning and administering education, but they will also be actively participating in it. In fact, the non-professional participants in the programme will soon outnumber the professional teachers. The system will thus justify the appellation, education of the people, for the people, and by the people.
- g) The above proposals do not imply that the people are to receive only elementary education (up to class VIII or even class X) and that they will only be entitled to non-formal post-elementary education at the secondary and university levels. This is not correct; and it is essential to emphasize that the people shall have an adequate share of full-time secondary and higher education as well. At present, the top 30 per cent of the people occupy 70 per cent of the seats in secondary education and 80 per cent of the seats in higher education. This skewed composition of the student

body must be changed and the people should get at least 50 per cent of the seats at these levels. How can this be done? Perhaps the following steps will help.

- i) Of course, this assumes that we shall universalise elementary education on a priority basis. If that is not done and elementary education continues to be completed only by 25 to 30 per cent of the children, all talk of replanning the composition of the student body at the post-elementary stage is futile.
- ii) We shall further assume that we shall implement fully the recommendation of the Commission that there shall be a nationwide programme for discovery and development of talent and that the top 5-15 per cent of the students at every stage shall be enabled, through scholarships and placement, to continue their education in good schools at the next stage. Let us assume that about 10 per cent of the seats will be taken up by this talented group. We will further assume that the selection procedures will be improved and based on merit *and* social justice so that at least half of these students will be from among the people.
- iii) The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are entitled to 21 per cent of the available seats on the basis of their population. But they actually avail themselves of 5 per cent seats only. While reservation on the population basis should continue for them, let us assume that, by A.D. 2000, they will occupy at least 15 per cent of the seats available.
- iv) There are three other aspiring and deserving groups to be considered: all children of poor parents (other than scheduled castes and tribes); all first generation learners, irrespective of social class and status; and all girls, also irrespective of social class and status. These groups have no assured financial support and no reservations. They occupy about 30-40 per cent of the seats (the girls coming mostly from the privileged classes). It is proposed that we may reserve this category for all children of the poor people (other than scheduled castes and scheduled tribes) only, with

special encouragement for girls and first generation learners. This group should be given some assured financial support and about 40 percent of the seats should be reserved for them.

- (v) The privileged classes will thus get the remaining 35 per cent of the seats (which is out of proportion to their number) and the reserved but unutilised seats.

One need not insist on the precise figures used. They should be taken only as indicative of the direction in which we should move. If these results are to be obtained, it is necessary to emphasize two programmes. Firstly, we should provide liberal financial support to talented but economically handicapped children who do not belong to the scheduled castes or scheduled tribes. This problem has been neglected far too long and it is undoubtedly one of the most important issues we shall have to tackle in the days ahead. In fact, by A.D. 2000 we should be able to base our programme of scholarships on economic considerations alone and delink it from birth or caste. Secondly, we will have to adopt the system of selective admissions. With reservations as indicated above and with the use of improved methods of selection that will combine merit with social justice selective admissions will not affect the vertical mobility of the poor. An open-door policy will continue to support the privileged as it has always done in the past and will have to be abandoned.

It will be seen that the Education Commission has made several valuable contributions to the development of these programmes. This is another area where the recommendations of the Commission are valid and will continue to be relevant in future.

### 3) Secondary Education

Secondary education has a crucial significance in the life of the individual because it is almost co-extensive with the difficult period of adolescence. It has also a significant role in the educational ladder because it provides teachers for elementary education and students for higher education. From the point of view of the needs of a modern society, it is secondary and not elementary education that is of crucial significance. That is why all the developed countries have provided universal secondary

education and that is why the Education Commission also recommended that, in the long run, we should make the ten year school universal. In spite of all this significance, however, secondary education in India has always remained the weakest link in the educational system. It has also continued to be comparatively neglected because it has lacked the prestige of higher education on the one hand and the popular appeal of elementary education on the other. What is even worse, it has not been studied adequately and its problems have attracted but little attention.

Some of its basic problems are historical in origin. The early secondary schools established in the early years of the nineteenth century were modelled after the grammar schools of England and provided only the academic stream which led through the matriculation, to the University. This early mould still continues to dominate the scene and even today 90 per cent of the secondary schools fall in this category. Diversification was recognised as the most needed reform nearly 90 years ago. But all attempts to diversify it have yielded only meager results. Vocationalisation was also recognised as a major reform equally early. But the attempts to introduce vocational courses and make secondary education terminal for a majority of its students have only had a very limited success. Its relevance is being questioned for a very long time. Even as late as 1902, its main object was described as teaching the English language. That has now ceased to dominate the scene, and rightly so. But we have not yet been able to define new objectives for secondary education. It is therefore said that secondary education fits a student for entry into a college and almost unfits him for everything else. These only shows how difficult, complex and intractable have been the problems of secondary education. It is because these are not solved that they multiply and become more difficult, more complex and more intractable problems of higher education.

One more point needs to be added. At present the size of the problems of secondary education is comparatively small because only 25 per cent of the students complete elementary education so that lower secondary education is availed of only by about 20 per cent of the age-group and higher secondary education only by about 8 per cent of the age-group. When elementary education



becomes universal, say, by 1990-91, the proportion of students going up will increase and by A.D.2,000, full-time lower secondary education may have to be provided to about 50 per cent of the age-group 14-16 and full-time higher secondary education to about 20 per cent of the age-group 17-18. Moreover, part-time, non-formal secondary education will have to be provided to a substantial proportion of those who leave the school at the end of the elementary and lower secondary stages and enter the world of work. When the scope and size of the system of secondary education is so enlarged, its difficulty and complexity will increase in proportion. There is therefore no doubt that the proper planning and development of secondary education will present one of the stiffest challenges to the educational planners of tomorrow.

The contribution of the Education Commission to the solution of the problems of secondary education was useful in some ways but neither adequate nor free from controversy.

- a) Among the useful contributions, mention may be made of the proposal to divide secondary education into two sub-stages: a lower secondary stage of three or two years ending with class X; and a higher secondary stage of two years (classes XI-XII). The adoption of the new pattern of 10 + 2 + 3 will be a distinct gain, especially if the + 2 stages are located in school. The Commission has also undone the damage arising from the multi-purpose concept introduced by the Secondary Education Commission. The suggestion of the Commission that specialisation should start later at the end of class X or at age 16 is now universally accepted.
- b) The Commission's proposals of an undifferentiated course of general education at the lower secondary stage have run into problems. Two criticisms levelled against the courses that came to be evolved to implement these recommendations were: they create too much of a uniformity to suit all types of talent and that the information load on students is unbearable (this was not of course a fault of the Commission). These issues were examined by the Ishwarbhai Patel Committee which simplified the curricula to some extent and also introduced some options or alternative courses.

- c) As was pointed out earlier, its proposals for vocationalisation were not very realistic nor adequate.
- d) Its recommendations on the organisation of courses of the lower secondary stage have now been modified considerably by the Adiseshiah Committee as discussed earlier.
- e) A major comment on the proposals of the Commission has been that the courses it provides are not adequately diversified to suit all types of talent. It is recognised that the Commission allowed a much greater flexibility in the choice of subjects or in their combinations than the multi-purpose schools did. But the argument is that the reform does not go far enough. After all is said and done, the Commission has recommended only two streams: an academic stream (still based on the old grammar school model) for those who would like to go to the university and terminal vocational courses for the others. It is contended that we should have a still greater diversity in the curricula (the need for this will increase as secondary education expands and eventually lower secondary education becomes universal) and evolve something like a comprehensive secondary schools of the UK.
- f) The Commission has not paid adequate attention to the problem of relevance. What is the precise use of the existing secondary education to those who do not go to a college? Is the existing secondary education relevant for our rural areas? This, it is contended, is *the* most crucial problem on which the Commission had little light to throw.
- g) The problem of improving standards in secondary education is extremely important, especially in the small rural schools. In this case also, the Commission does not provide adequate guidance.

It is not necessary to elaborate this list of criticisms further. It would be sufficient to sum up by saying that the main problems we have been facing in secondary education are: How do we reconcile its two objectives of preparing the students for the university and also provide them with terminal courses of a practical vocational type? How do we introduce diversity to suit all types of talent without creating water-tight and irrevocable

streams? How do we make secondary education relevant, especially to those who do not proceed to the university? How do we improve standards? and how do we solve the complex organisational problems, especially in the smaller schools which will be the norm in rural areas? It is the failure to solve these problems that has made secondary education the weakest link in the chain. The whole argument is that even the Education Commission has not given enough guidance to solve these problems whose complexity and difficulty will increase in the days to come. In the main, the criticism is justified; and this is therefore an area in which a good deal of fresh thinking, research and experimentation is called for.

#### 4) Higher Education

The Education Commission makes a good contribution when it discusses the objectives of the university system and the role that the universities have to play in national development. It also presents a grand vision of the university as a community of scholars engaged in the pursuit of truth and excellence, and most of its recommendations are meant to create this model. Its insistence on making the remuneration of university and college teachers comparable to that of other major public services so that a reasonable proportion of the country's top talent goes into the university system was absolutely right. Its proposals to make the affiliated colleges academically and financially viable and to confer autonomy on them were sound, but probably not adequate to meet the situation. It did a yeoman's service to the adoption of original languages as media of instruction, although all its proposals on the subject have yet to be fully worked out. The introduction of the National Education Service, though in a truncated form, was a corollary of one of its recommendations. And this is probably all that can be said in favour of the Report. Its recommendations for improving selection procedures and raising the quality of teachers have not been implemented nor has its proposal of selective admissions been accepted as yet. This should of course be blamed on implementation than on the Commission. But it cannot also be gainsaid that the inadequacies of the proposals of the Education Commission on the reform of higher education have been too significant to be ignored. What is probably worse, it does not present any deep analysis of the

factors which are responsible for the continuing crisis in which the system finds itself and it does not therefore make adequate proposals to resolve it. It also ignores the imperative need, which will become more urgent as time passes, to diversify higher education and to create a variety of models among which the classical model (on which the Commission relies almost exclusively) can be one. This subject therefore also finds hardly any treatment in the Report of the Commission. On the whole, therefore, one is left with the feeling that in tackling the basic issues of higher education in the days ahead, in making it relevant or linking it closely with national development and raising its standards, the proposals of the Education Commission provide only a partial answer. This is also an area where a good deal of fresh thinking, research and experimentation is called for.

Among the major issues that will have to be tackled in higher education in the years ahead, the following may be mentioned.

- a) The programme of using regional languages as media of instruction has to be developed further, with all the ancillary reforms needed to maintain standards.
- b) Continued effort will have to be made to introduce improved selection procedures that combine merit with social justice.
- c) Programmes have to be decided to ensure that all university teachers and students do effectively participate in meaningful and challenging proposals of national and social service. The present N.S.S. proposal is only a poor answer to this need and a bolder attempt is called for.
- d) A much greater expansion of non-formal programmes of part-time and own-time education is needed. The target suggested by the Commission in this regard that about one-third of the total enrolment in higher education should be in these courses by 1986 (para 12.22) is still far from realised.
- e) There is no justification for the continuance of the "dual" system which we operate in higher education, i.e. there is a core of high quality and prestigious institutions which are mostly availed of by the privileged classes, surrounded by a large penumbra of institutions which maintain poor

standards and in which we offer “open-door” access to the under-privileged groups and provide them a seat in *some* institution, however poor, and in *some* course, however useless. The Education Commission diagnosed a similar malady at the school stage and suggested the concepts of the neighbourhood school and the common school system. These cannot be extended to the university stage. But some other measures will have to be adopted to see that this dual system does come to an end. This problem was not highlighted in the Report of the Education Commission. But it does need careful study and close attention.

- f) In the present model of higher education, the two functions of (i) producing, conserving and diffusing knowledge and (ii) grading and certification, mainly for purposes of employment, are combined. It is this combination that creates several problems. Is this combination really essential? If it is not, how can we separate and organise the grading and certification function independently of the universities? This is really the programme of delinking jobs from degrees that is now widely and rather loosely being talked of. On the other hand, if the combination of these two functions is inevitable, how do we solve the problems arising there from?
- g) At present, the system of our higher education is almost exclusively dependent on the classical model (the agricultural universities are one recent exception). The higher education of the future will have to be provided through diverse institutional forms. This is another field where a good deal of fresh thinking and experimentation is needed and in which the Report of the Commission provides little guidance.
- h) The problem of raising standards in higher education still continues to baffle us. That concentration of resources is necessary for improving standards is readily granted. But how much to concentrate and where—this is still an unanswered question. Nor have we been able to strike a proper balance between policies of concentration and dispersal. We still know very little why institutions rise to heights and then decline: and above all we are not able to

add substantially to the competent and dedicated leadership available in the university system and not even able to make the best use of whatever talent is actually available. In fact, the whole question of proper management of the educational system from the point of view of improving standards is wide open and this is an area on which we shall have to concentrate in the years ahead.

- i) The problem of students will become still more pressing as time passes, particularly the problems of students from the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other weaker sections who will come to the universities with several handicaps and who will need a good deal of remedial teaching. The students of the system of higher education have long ceased to be a homogeneous body and we will have to learn to divide them into separate groups and to deal with each group in accordance with their needs and potential. Student services are weak and the extent of student aid is limited at present. These will have to be strengthened and expanded; and the challenging programme of associating students with the governance of institutions of higher education will have to be developed further.
- j) There is a first-rate crisis of management in the universities which are not even able to do their routine jobs like holding examinations on time and wherein the basic educational process itself comes to a grinding halt all too frequently. Modernisation and improvement of university administration is one of the major challenges of the future; and here also there is immense scope for fresh thinking and experimentation.

It is hardly necessary to illustrate the point in greater detail. What has been said already is enough to show that the proper development of higher education is one of the major tasks which face us in the creation of a national system of education. In this area, as well as in the development of secondary education, we shall have to go far beyond the lead provided by the Education Commission.

### 5) Administration and Finance

Finally, several modifications are needed to the proposals made by the Education Commission for the administration and finance of the national system of education.

In so far as management of education is concerned, the most valuable contribution of the Education Commission is the suggestion that all school education should be decentralised to the district level and entrusted to specially constituted District and Municipal School Boards with adequate provision for delegation of authority to the local community. Another good contribution of the commission is the idea of evolving an integrated system wherein different stages will work together and educational institutions will not be isolated or atomised. But in so far as leadership, institutions and processes of education administration at the central and state levels are concerned, the Commission has no major contribution to make because it depended too much on the creation of the I.E.S. which is no longer a practicable proposition. We will therefore have to design good models of educational administration at all levels in which the universities, educational institutions, teachers, students and parents will be able to take part and which will be based on the principles of decentralisation, diversification, elasticity and dynamism. This is again an almost virgin soil whose scope for fresh thinking and experimentation is almost infinite.

The Education Commission had recommended that six per cent of the national income should be devoted to education by 1985-86. This recommendation was accepted by Government and included in the National Policy on Education (1968). As stated earlier, the total educational expenditure needed for a national system of education with adequate coverage and quality will have to be worked out afresh. But on the basis of the experience of the past 12 years, it seems desirable to highlight the following issues.

- a) As we go from plan to plan, the committed expenditure on education increases rapidly. Therefore, the plan expenditure necessarily becomes proportionately smaller. In other words, we get into a situation where the educational tasks to be attempted increase from plan to plan while the plan allocations continue to decrease. If we were to depend upon plan allocation alone to bring about

educational development (this is what we have generally done in the past) the task appears almost hopeless. Ways and means to utilise *all* education expenditure both plan and non-plan must therefore be found. This will make our task easier because total educational expenditure does increase rapidly from plan to plan.

- b) The levels of educational expenditures already reached are very high; and it is therefore becoming increasingly difficult to find *additional* funds for education in an overall situation of scarcity and in the face of severe competition from other sectors. It is therefore obvious that we can never have all the resources we need for a good national system of education. It therefore becomes imperative to reduce unit costs, to explore all possible methods of economy, to use facilities intensively and to bring down the total cost of the national system of education within practical financial limits. It is easy to argue that a poor country cannot have good and sufficient education. The challenge is to develop programmes which will enable even poor countries to have national systems of education of adequate coverage and quality.
- c) Wasteful and ineffective expenditure is the order of the day in every sector and at every stage of education. This is a luxury which we could never afford. At any rate, we cannot afford it any longer.
- d) Intensive utilisation of facilities is yet another way to make every available *rupee* go the longest way. In the years ahead, this intensive use should be emphasized even more than additional investment.
- e) While money is needed, no amount of money can solve every educational problem and money alone can never secure proper educational development. This will be even truer in the years ahead. It is, therefore, necessary to emphasize the non-monetary inputs in educational development (e.g., better planning, sustained hard work, dedicated efforts of teachers, students and educational administrators, etc.), which are of far greater significance than mere investment of additional monetary resources.

The tasks of educational development facing the country are extremely complex and difficult: to outline the national system of education suited to the new society we desire to create and transform, improve and expand the existing system so that it becomes the national system of education we would like to have. The success of our efforts will, therefore, largely depend on the dedication and expertise (including administrative and financial skills) that we shall develop.

### IMPLEMENTATION

In the preceding sections we discussed the two main tasks before us, viz. (1) to visualise the future society and (2) to prepare a blueprint of a national system of education suited for it. We shall now turn to the discussion of the third important task before us, viz. how to implement the proposals of educational reform that we may formulate in order to create the national system of education. One need not underestimate the significance of the first two tasks which are largely academic in character. But, obviously, an overriding significance attaches itself to the third which is action-oriented, especially as our largest failure has been, not so much in the generation of knowledge, as in its application to social situations. When the Education Commission met Dr. Zakir Husain and sought his advice about its Report, he emphasized this aspect of the problem and said, "Just say three words: implement, implement and implement."

From the narrative in the preceding chapters, it has become obvious that the recommendations of the Education Commission were not implemented properly. This was due, in many cases, to factors inherent in the individual recommendations; and these have been discussed in Chapters IV-VIII. But this poor implementation was also due, in a way, to the absence of a general atmosphere or infrastructure which could have helped to implement better. It is these general conditions which we shall now discuss in this concluding section. Incidentally, the discussion will also involve a consideration of the change agents as visualised by the Commission.

### Wanted: A Nationwide Movement

Two preliminary observations can be made. A programme for the radical reconstruction of the educational system must take the

form of a nationwide movement if it is to succeed. Individual participation is much better in a national movement: larger numbers of people are induced to participate and each participant also tries to make his best contribution. This national movement will have to be organised at the macro-level to provide guidance, and support; and at the micro-level, it should consist of thousands of experiments and innovations on the part of schools, teachers and students.

The second point is that a movement for a radical reform of education can succeed best only when it is accompanied by a simultaneous movement for a corresponding socio-economic or political reform. Before 1947, the movement for national education developed in the shadow of the struggle for freedom, and the ideas of national education drew their main sustenance from the movement for political independence. This movement came to an end in 1947. There has been no mass movement since then. But the ruling elite have been trying to consolidate and improve their position. Consequently, all programmes of educational reform which were meant for the ruling classes were successfully implemented on a priority basis. These include: expansion of agricultural, engineering and medical education; the development of elite institutions such as IITs and IIMs, large expansion of public and special schools, especially those with English medium, the expansion of "merit" scholarships most of which are bagged by their children, and so on. But there has been no movement to improve the standard of living of the poorer sections of the society and no movement to build up their awareness and their organisations to help them to come into their own. Consequently, all programmes of educational reconstruction meant for the people have languished (e.g., universal elementary education, liquidation of adult illiteracy, etc.). The lesson is obvious: if we are keen to develop a programme of educating the people through adult education and universal elementary education, we must organise a nation-wide movement of organising the poor and of helping them to raise their standard of living. In a broader context, it may be said that we should initiate simultaneous and direct political and economic action to create the new society if we really desire to succeed in creating a national system of education. In the absence of such coordinated joint action, it will not be possible to achieve meaningful results.

### The Role of the Political Parties

Another lesson of the past highlights the role of political parties in educational reform.

In the present situation, there is very little dialogue between educationists and politicians. A widely shared view is that education is meant for academics only and that politicians should keep their hands off it. When the Education Commission was appointed, Mr. M. C. Chagla boasted that it consisted only of academics and that he had not appointed a single politician on it. But this isolation makes educationists blind to many aspects of the educational reality which are basically political. For instance, I cannot see how an issue like selective admissions can be solved except jointly by politicians and educationists. On the other hand, politicians remain largely ignorant of basic educational problems because of this very isolation so that when they interfere with education—which they often do—they do more harm than good. In other words, the educationists desire full political support without any political interference (which is their concept of autonomy); and politicians interfere too frequently with education (which is their concept of responsibility to the legislature) without committing themselves to provide any support. A situation of this type does immense harm. What we need is better education of the politicians, the training of party cadres in education, and the preparation of an educational programme by each party to which it stands committed. This has not been done by any party so far. But this is the direction in which they will have to move. On their side, academics have to examine the political implications of all educational programmes so that they are able to formulate and implement their ideas better. They have also to strive to muster political support for desirable educational reforms.

It is unfortunate that the Education Commission did not highlight the role of political parties in educational reconstruction. But experience has shown that political interventions can distort or impede the implementation of good proposals and that it is the lack of political understanding and commitment that is mainly responsible for shelving some of the most valuable recommendations of the Commission. We should, therefore, strive our best in future to cultivate a dialogue with

political parties on the need, content and consequences of a radical transformation of education.

### Role of Central and State Governments

The Education Commission placed the responsibility for creating the national system of education squarely on the central and state governments. As we saw earlier, they have not, by and large, risen to the occasion. Why is it so and how can we make them take greater interest in the programme in the years ahead?

Governments generally act in response to pressures, either from within or from without. A pressure from within can come from two sources— the party and the bureaucracy. As stated above, the political parties have generally remained ignorant of basic educational problems and take little interest except in such things as transfers, opening of new institutions, admissions, or grants (i.e., issues mainly dealing with patronage). The educational bureaucracy is on the whole weak and unable either to formulate policies or to implement them. There have been, therefore, few pressures on governments from within to undertake and implement radical educational changes. Unfortunately even pressures from outside have been non-existent. Of course, all the interested groups have agitated, every now and then, for their individual or group demands. In fact, such demands have been almost continuous and governments have been reacting to them in one way or the other. But there have been no pressures or demands for radical educational reforms as such. There are no agencies in the country for whom “education” itself is a constituency and for which they are prepared to fight. It is, therefore, obvious that our success in future will depend upon the extent to which we can create both internal and external pressures on central and state governments to carry out radical educational changes. In particular, we will have to concentrate on organising pressures from within the party and from outside the government. Here again, the existence of a nation-wide movement can help a great deal.

### Role of Teachers, Students and Educational Administrators

The Education Commission expected the teachers, students and educational administrators to play a major role in creating a

national system of education through their sustained and dedicated efforts. But this expectation has not been realised. We must find out the reason and suggest measures which will enable them to play an effective role in future.

If a national system of education is to be created, we must generate adequate knowledge: this is the task of the researchers. We must generate professional competence among the teachers which is a function of their quality as well as of their general and professional education. We must side by side generate good motivation among the students which is a function of their value system, of the teachers and of the ultimate social rewards. We must also generate managerial competence among educational administrators. But this is not enough; and the basic problems of a developing country cannot be solved by knowledge or technical expertise alone. They need, above all, a commitment to the country, a commitment to education, a proper perspective of socio-economic and educational transformation and a determination to bring it about. It has been our experience that this vision of a new society and education and the moral commitment to strive for their creation is lacking, by and large, in our teachers, students and educational administrators; and it is because of this that they could not play the role of change agents which the Education Commission assigned to them. We must strive, in the years ahead, to create this vision and commitment in them. It is here that a nation-wide movement for educational and social transformation is imperative.

The Education Commission probably erred in thinking that a movement for a radical reform of the educational system can arise within the system itself and can also be implemented largely by teachers, students, and educational administrators. This may be true in the case of pedagogic reforms which remain, more or less, within the system. But it does not apply to radical reforms whose impact goes beyond the education system and which have to be accompanied by corresponding social reforms. It is, therefore, necessary to highlight the role of social and political workers who can generate a movement for socio-economic transformation and also support the educational reforms which would favour such transformation. The Education Commission did not take note of the valuable contributions which political and social workers can make indirectly to educational development.

But this oversight must be corrected. These workers will have to be given insights into educational reforms and enabled to link them effectively with the socioeconomic reforms to which they are committed. They will then be able to generate forces outside the educational system which will stimulate and support reform movements within the education system itself. In their words, it is the combined action of education-conscious political and social workers and politically conscious and socially committed teachers, students, and educational administrators that can unleash the forces that will help to implement plans of radical educational reform.

The creation of a national system of education is not an easy task; it involves the making of hard decisions, the provision of massive resources, the organisation of a sustained nation-wide movement and a preparedness to alienate many a vested interest. The task becomes all the more difficult because it has to be accompanied by a simultaneous effort at a radical reconstruction of the society itself. The experience of the past thirty years has shown that we can succeed in this task only if:

- we make a big R&D effort to generate the required knowledge and expertise to plan radical educational changes and to implement them;
- we educate all concerned on the need and implications of such educational transformation and the price to be paid for it.
- we create and sustain a nation-wide movement at the macro and micro-level to bring about radical changes;
- we educate political parties and workers on basic educational issues and create strong pressures within the parties themselves in favour of the educational changes needed;
- we organise a continuous campaign in favour of the educational reforms throughout the country so that sufficient pressures are generated from outside to make Governments sit up and take notice;
- we harness the assistance of all political and social workers who should be made education-conscious and see the close relationship between their socio-political programmes into educational transformation; and



- we create the necessary vision and moral commitment among teachers, students and educational administrators for the new society and the new education we need.

It is these measures that will create the social climate within which it will be possible to plan and create a national system of education suited to the new society visualised in the Preamble to the Constitution.

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